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Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report
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FBIS-NES-94-227 *25 November 1994*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Rabin, 'Arafat Fail To Make Progress on Elections

NC2511073494 Paris AFP in English 2357 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Oviedo, Spain, Nov 24 (AFP)—PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat talked with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin late Thursday [24 November] after both men received a peace award, but failed to announce the agreement he had hoped on staging Palestinian elections.

'Arafat, head of the Palestinian Authority running self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, said only that the hour-long meeting had been positive.

Rabin said he would meet 'Arafat again next week but refused to comment on the topic or nature of Thursday's meeting, the first since last Friday's clashes in the Gaza Strip between Palestinian police and fundamentalists opposed to the peace accord with Israel.

Negotiations between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation on staging elections and organising an Israeli army withdrawal from Palestinian population centres on the West Bank have so far made no headway.

Speaking in Madrid earlier, 'Arafat accused Israel of holding up the elections, a critical next stage of autonomy, but told reporters, "I hope to reach an agreement on this subject with Mr. Rabin."

The joint Nobel Peace Prize winners received the Prince of Asturias prize for international cooperation in this northern Spanish town for their "decisive efforts" towards peace.

At the presentation ceremony, 'Arafat said the award was "a great homage to the Palestinian people, to their martyrs, to their wounded and their prisoners."

He insisted that "one of the best ways to consolidate peace is to allow the Palestinian people to elect freely their representatives and legislators, through fair elections under international auspices."

Rabin, for his part, said both sides had to work to preserve peace.

"We have to work sometimes against human nature, which seeks vengeance. We try to turn foe to friend, we try to move the hands of time forward, above all not to look back."

He said he hoped that elections could be organised "as soon as possible," saying they were an element of "stability," but that withdrawal of Israeli troops was necessary first.

Rabin, commenting on an 'Arafat threat to go ahead with the autonomy poll regardless of the Israelis, said: "We support his decision to have elections, it's up to him."

"We will not intervene as long as the elections will be for a body that is defined by our first agreement, the Declaration of Principles."

But he said "to bring it about we need to reach an overall or at least an outline agreement for the interim arrangement in the West Bank."

They had decided at their last meeting "that since elections are related to pre-redeployment of the Israeli forces from the centers of the population, we cannot tackle the election by itself," he pointed out.

He also criticised the slow pace of aid for the Palestinians and hoped that it will "arrive as soon as possible and will be spent properly to build projects."

The two had separate meetings with Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez and King Juan Carlos before a joint lunch attended by their wives and Queen Sofia.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Denies Beilin Claim on Meeting Envoy

NC2411130694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1237 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 24 Nov (MENA)—The Arab League Secretariat General denied today that a meeting had been held in Cairo between Israeli deputy foreign minister Yosi Beilin and an Arab League representative.

Counsellor Tal'at Hamid, the Arab League's official spokesman, said the Arab League was surprised by the report published in a weekly magazine citing Beilin as saying that he met in Cairo with the Arab League's representative. He said the report is baseless and that Beilin should name the official he claims to have met in Cairo.

Iraqi Envoy Urges Arabs To End 'State of Conflict'

NC2311170794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1645 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Nov (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid today received Ambassador Nabil Najm, Iraq's permanent delegate to the Arab League.

Afterward the Iraqi official said his country will continue to cooperate with the International Committee of the Red Cross to resolve the issue of Kuwaiti prisoners and missing persons.

Asked why Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid has not visited Iraq, Najm said: Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid is the Arab League secretary general and can visit any Arab state when he wants.

He pointed out that the secretary general has repeatedly welcomed the Iraqi step of recognizing the State of

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Kuwait, adding that Iraq embarked on that step to prove its desire to establish good neighborly relations and bring about peace and stability in the Arab region.

The Iraqi delegate appealed to Kuwait and Arab states to proceed toward ending the state of conflict that has prevailed.

Ambassador Najm affirmed that Iraq has fulfilled all the UN Security Council resolutions. He said the problem of prisoners and missing persons will be handled in a positive manner, denying that there are Saudi prisoners in his country. He added that people go missing in wars, adding that his country is cooperating positively with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Palestinian Affairs

Hamas Leaders, PA Official Said Targets of Shootings

TA2411123294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian sources in Gaza have said that last night anonymous gunmen fired several shots at a Palestinian Authority [PA] security officer, wounding him lightly in the leg. Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists claim that shots were fired early this morning at the houses of three Hamas leaders in the Gaza Strip, including the home of Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar.

Yesterday, 20 of the Islamic Jihad activists arrested after the bicycle terrorist attack at Netzarim junction were released from custody. Another 70 Islamic Jihad activists remain in jail.

Islamic Jihad supporters told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that the Palestinian police had attempted to humiliate and intimidate the detainees by forcibly shaving their heads and beards.

Our correspondent Dani Zaqen notes that the level of cooperation between the Palestinian police and the Israeli security forces has increased in recent days. This morning, for example, the commander of the Palestinian police in the southern Gaza Strip participated in the searches conducted in Rafah following attempts to harm IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers. Terrorists detonated an explosive charge and even fired at an IDF patrol. There were no casualties.

Further on Attack on Hamas Members

NC2411110394 Paris AFP in English 0948 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Gaza City, Gaza Strip, Nov 24 (AFP)—Gunmen attacked the homes of three Hamas leaders Thursday [24 November] as the hardline Islamic group struck a peace deal with Yasir 'Arafat's self-rule authority to avoid more bloodshed in the Gaza Strip, the organisation said.

The assailants fired at the Gaza City homes of Hamas officials Mahmud al-Zahhar, 'Imad Faluji and Ahmad Bahr in pre-dawn attacks on Thursday, shattering windows but causing no injuries, the movement said.

The shootings came as Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, and the Palestinian Authority agreed to halt street protests by armed supporters and to stop distributing inflammatory leaflets in an attempt to avoid a repetition of street clashes last Friday which left 16 dead and 200 wounded.

Hamas has called for a big turnout at a rally on Friday, one week after the battles between its supporters and Palestinian Authority police.

Faluji said the Thursday's shootings were carried out by "Israel and its collaborators" as well as some members of the Palestinian Authority "who have an interest in creating problems and provoking a civil war."

Al-Zahhar, a Hamas spokesman, said "this cowardly attack is undoubtedly the work of people who want to torpedo the accord and spark new violence."

He said the Gaza peace deal, announced by Israeli-Arab mediators late Wednesday, had limited scope and his movement still blamed 'Arafat's self-rule authority for last week's bloodshed.

"All sides have agreed to stop holding armed demonstrations in the streets and publishing inflammatory leaflets," he said.

The mediators had announced late Wednesday that they had brokered an agreement between the self-rule authority and opposition groups to prevent further clashes. [passage omitted]

VOP Denies Report on Attack on PA Member

JN2411121294 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1140 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] We have received the following from the Palestinian National Authority Interior Ministry:

The report broadcast by the Israeli radio a short while ago on the shooting incident in which brother Amin al-Hindi, director general of the Palestinian General Intelligence, was allegedly targeted is incorrect. This report has been fabricated by known parties.

'Arafat on Gaza Events, Aid, Israeli Policies

NC2411074894 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 24 Nov 94

[Telephone interview with Yasir 'Arafat, in Gaza, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] President 'Arafat, welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

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['Arafat] Thank you.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Could you tell us about current moves by the Palestinian Authority [PA] to restore things in the Gaza Strip to what they were and about the solidarity and unity of the sons of the Palestinian people?

['Arafat] Unfortunately, it ought to be made known that what happened was a prearranged incident incited and ordered from abroad. It was an attempt to confuse the PA and give the world the impression that the Palestinian people are not competent to take care of themselves and restore their status among nations, particularly at a time when we are on the threshold of two basic stages. These stages are the transitional stage, in which the PA is expected to extend its authority to the rest of the West Bank, and the donor countries' meeting that is supposed to take place this month.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Mr. President, could we discuss in further detail the real reasons behind the recent Gaza incidents?

['Arafat] It is an attempt to confuse the PA by some sides that are getting support and orders from foreign sides. It is an attempt to exaggerate affairs beyond their real size and reality, especially as the various dimensions of the issue have been revealed. Most of the martyrs were from the Fatah movement and were killed at close range. It is not plausible that there were problems between the Fatah movement and the PA. We should make it known that this is what happened. I tell all my brothers: Come let us build this Palestinian house away from tutelage and dependency, away from Israeli attempts to undermine the Palestinian struggle march, and let us entrench the pillars of Palestinian entity and state with Jerusalem as its capital.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] President 'Arafat, President Husni Mubarak is currently on an important European tour. The most important topic he has discussed with the leaders of the countries he has so far visited is the process of strengthening peace efforts in the region, particularly on the Palestinian track, as well as supporting the PA. As the Palestinian leader, how do you view Egyptian moves during this stage?

['Arafat] Actually, I personally would like to thank President Husni Mubarak for his good efforts. Along with his other efforts, there is always the Palestinian concern and the issue of extending help to the Palestinian people. This was evident in his statements during his tour. In my name and in the name of my brothers and the Palestinian people, I express to his excellency all my thanks and appreciation. I pray to God that we will continue the march until we both pray together in Jerusalem, a city holy to both Muslims and Christians.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] President 'Arafat, does the donor countries' stalling over the aid and grants they promised the PA find you asking the sons of the Palestinian people to build the Palestinian entity and offer moral and material support to set up the infrastructure and rebuild the autonomous areas?

['Arafat] Undoubtedly, some of the basic factors we depend on now, in view of the delays and hesitation of the donor countries over offering what they have pledged, are God, first and foremost, our Palestinian people, and the Palestinian cadres inside and outside the Palestinian territory. I thank them all. This is a call, praise be to God, to which many of my investing Palestinian brothers have started responding. Eleven banks have so far been opened. Private holding companies have been set up that have started their activities on Palestinian land. So I hope these efforts will be multiplied.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] President Yasir 'Arafat, the PA is going through its first real test on Palestinian territory. When do we expect to see the cohesion and solidarity of the Palestinian people on Palestinian territory in building the newborn Palestinian entity?

['Arafat] Did you see the demonstration staged the day before yesterday? I believe this gave the answer as to the way in which the people are united and consistent. The people have one source of nobility and strength, namely pure Palestinian nationalism without subservience or custodianship. Rallies are today sweeping all the cities, villages, and camps of the West Bank and Jericho in support of this Palestinian stance against the challenges we are facing from any side. We reiterate what we have always said, namely, that we [word indistinct] and with democracy, but primarily we stand for the citizen's security and safety and for law and order, which applies to all of us and under which we can practice pluralism and democracy and open broad horizons for the Palestinian homeland, dream, and the newborn entity so that it can see the light everywhere and on every inch of Palestinian soil. Come, let us unite so that can we build this homeland and fight together to build the base for this homeland, a homeland for the free and honest sons of the struggling Palestinian people.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] President 'Arafat, you will be visiting Spain and will meet with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. Are there new proposals?

['Arafat] The meeting will be held on the sidelines of the award presentation. We hope we can discuss with him some points we agreed on at our last meeting, primarily starting immediately the final preparations for holding the elections in all the Palestinian territories. This means the Israelis' withdrawal from the populated areas of the West Bank so that we can hold free and democratic elections under international supervision and through which the Palestinian people can express this nobility and this democracy we believe in and that we established wherever we were. I called it the democracy of a jungle in

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which everyone carried guns [dimuqratiyat ghabat al-banadiq] during the most difficult stage of the Palestinian revolution. The people who created this democracy in a jungle in which everyone carried guns can create democracy and pluralism under the aegis of law and the sovereignty of law.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] During his Washington visit, Rabin called for speeding up aid to you. How do you assess this stance?

['Arafat] Thank you very much for raising this issue. I say one thing: Promises from [word indistinct] are not enough. Over a year has passed since we signed the Washington agreement and then the Cairo one and we are still waiting for promises to be fulfilled. Everyone should know that Gaza is suffering real famine. Everyone should know that the rate of unemployment is 58 percent. We should know what the closure of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which the Israeli authorities resort to occasionally when they ban workers and exports, means. They constrict us in many ways. Fishermen were once banned from fishing. This, regrettably, did happen. But our people are strong. Do not forget that our people enjoy the highest rate of education in the region even when compared with the Israeli occupiers over 27 years. This does not come from me but from the Israeli Japhet Institute's reports. We hope our next meeting will rise to the level of responsibility, because there is an international political, moral, and material responsibility toward the Palestinian people, who are paying the price of the UN resolutions that have not been implemented.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] President of Palestine Yasir 'Arafat, we thank you very much and always welcome you on the Voice of Arabs.

['Arafat] God willing, we will meet so that we can pray together in Jerusalem.

'Arafat Implicates Iran in Gaza Disturbances

LD2411214294 Madrid TVE Internacional Television in Spanish 1400 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat are right now having lunch with the King and Queen of Spain at the Zarzuela Palace. After lunch, Rabin and 'Arafat will travel to Oviedo, where this afternoon they are to recieve the Prince of Asturias Prize for International Cooperation. Before travelling to Oviedo to receive this prize, the Prince of Asturias Prize, Prime Minister Rabin and Palestinian leader 'Arafat had separate talks with the Spanish prime minister. Gonzalez reaffirmed Spain's political and material support for the peace process. On Monday 28 November the Israelis and Palestinians will resume the negotiations on holding the elections in Palestine.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] 'Arafat referred to Spain as a friendly country and a traditional defender of the Palestinian cause. The Prince of Asturias Prize, he said, is not for me but for the whole Palestinian people. On the subject of last Friday's events in Gaza, in which 14 Palestinians died, 'Arafat directly accused Iran of a conspiracy.

['Arafat, in Arabic with superimposed Spanish translation] What the Iranian leaders have announced, in particular Mohtashami, has revealed the conspiracy. What Mr. Mohtashami revealed in Tehran two days ago has revealed the dimensions of the Iranian conspiracy and Iran's involvement in the disturbances which occurred.

[Correspondent] 'Arafat revealed that negotiations are taking part between the various Palestinian political forces, including Hamas, to achieve national harmony. The president of the self-rule areas insisted on his election demand.

['Arafat, in Arabic with superimposed Spanish translation] We insist that the elections must be held as soon as possible, because the elections must take place under international supervision, and the Israeli forces must be withdrawn before the elections are held.

[Correspondent] The Israeli prime minister responded to 'Arafat's criticisms about obstructing the election process with conciliatory words. Rabin said that he wants the elections to be held, but agreements on security matters in the West Bank must be achieved first, and he announced the date of the resumption of the negotiations.

[Rabin, in English with superimposed Spanish translation] We support his idea of holding elections. That is his problem. We will not oppose it. We have agreed to meet on Monday in Brussels and begin those negotiations.

[Correspondent] Rabin blamed the problems through which the peace process is going on the Palestinian Islamic radicals, and he avoided direct criticism of 'Arafat. On the subject of the problems between the countries prepared to finance Palestinian self-rule and the PLO, the Israeli leader was cautious, but he recalled the criticisms made in Western political and financial circles of the lack of openness in the financial management of the Palestinian headquarters. [end recording]

Commentary Blames 'Figures in Iran'

JN2311181894 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1448 GMT 23 Nov 94

[Political commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] When our Palestinian arena was infiltrated by forces of darkness and backwardness, our response was to let a thousand flowers bloom. This, despite the fact that the flowers were lifeless and their smell repugnant. They have sought to ruin our national Palestinian rhythm by discrediting our national struggle and sabotaging our political program. They have set out

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to hurt the PLO and the Palestinian National Authority, the Palestinian construction drive, and the peace process itself. These forces have reared their poisonous heads and embarked on destructive operations. They are looking for a role in our Arab and Palestinian arena—a dark and destructive role that tastes of historical hatreds. They are as much against our Palestinian people as they are against our Arab nation that has, throughout history, stood against them playing such a devastating role in Islamic life.

It is high time we named names and pointed fingers at certain power centers and figures in Iran and their extensions in the Arab and Palestinian and Islamic arenas. Prominent among these is Iran's Interior Minister [title as heard] 'Ali Mohtashemi. A spiteful mullah, Mohtashemi has called, in statements published by the London-based Arabic newspaper AL-HAYAH, for assassinations and terror in the Palestinian arena, in order to spread corruption and crime. A case in point is what took place in Gaza last Friday.

This brazen and hostile position must be seen in the context of certain powers in Iran bent on meddling in Palestinian affairs and creating a climate conducive to crime and terror, as they did elsewhere. Certain power centers in Iran are advancing, as a cloak, the pretext of liberating Palestine on religious grounds and hostility to the arch Satan, among other flimsy excuses. However, they take flight from reality into their world of intrigue and incitement, murders, and exporting their self-styled Islamic revolution, when in fact they are rejected and disowned by Islam.

Our Palestinian and Arab and Islamic nations must recall that these who are trading in Muslim blood are the ones who turned down the notion of jihad when it came up at the Islamic summit in the Senegalese capital Dakar. They have wrought havoc in Afghanistan by fanning the flames of war there and later were behind such devastation in Algeria. 'Ali Mohtashemi, setting himself up as judge and executioner, even had the gall to attack His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat and say that he will punish him and President Bill Clinon, among others, holding them responsible for what happened in Gaza City. Mohtashemi seems not to notice that Yasir 'Arafat resides in the hearts of Palestinians wherever they may be—in the homeland and in the diaspora. Hasn't he seen Palestinian masses hoisting 'Arafat's picture at the Gaza march and today's rally in Jericho? Yasir 'Arafat is a symbol of Palestinian national struggle, a peacemaker who has been awarded the Nobel peace prize, a man protected by his Palestinian people, his Arab nation, and advocates of peace and freedom throughout the world. But Iran's interior minister has now furnished irrefutable evidence that Iranian agencies are behind the conspiracy against our Palestinian National Authority and Palestinian people. Iranian circles have proved that they masterminded the Gaza incidents and were thus behind the assassination of a number of our Palestinian strugglers. The Palestinian people will not be intimidated by these famous Magian vagaries. Having objected to our brothers' interference in our Palestinian affairs, are we to tolerate the interference of pretenders of Islam and fake advocates of liberation, who are little more than plotters working only in darkness? We remember how, during the 1982 Israeli siege of Beirut, they did nothing beyond screaming at the top of their lungs. Let these and their extensions know that we will not have them wreck our national arena or Palestinian national rhythm.

Hamas Official Dismisses 'Arafat Charges on Iran

NC2411195194 London MBC Television in Arabic 1810 GMT 24 Nov 94

[Report on telephone interview with Mahmud al-Zahhar, a Hamas official, by 'Abdallah Hamzah in Gaza—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a telephone interview with MBC, Mahmud al-Zahhar, an official of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in Gaza, has denied 'Arafat's accusations that Iran was responsible for the events in Gaza. He held the Palestinian Authority [PA] responsible for these events.

[Hamzah] What has happened to the agreement reached between Hamas and the PA to maintain order during the Hamas demonstration tomorrow? What is stopping the continuation of calm in the town?

[Al-Zahhar] First, the agreement is not only between Hamas and the PA; it is also between the PA and all the opposition factions. Second, the agreement does not cover the demonstration, because there will be no demonstration tomorrow. There will be a mammoth popular gathering to commemorate the annual anniversary marking the martyrdom of a Palestinian hero martyr, 'Imad 'Aql.

Third, the agreement is permanent and not just linked to one event—namely, tomorrow's gathering.

[Hamzah] The Fatah hawks met in Gaza today. Some reports say that this military wing of the Fatah Movement is likely to become more active. What is your view on this?

[Al-Zahhar] In my opinion, this matter will free Hamas to assume its responsibilities. If the Fatah faction assumes its powers in the occupied territories and ignores the Authority, this will become a precedent for all factions to pursue the same methods. Accordingly, this step will weaken the stand of Mr. 'Arafat and should be reassessed by him.

[Hamzah] During his visit in Madrid today, President 'Arafat accused Iran of being responsible for the Gaza confrontation. What is the reality behind Iranian support for Hamas, and what is Iran's role in the events that took place last Friday?

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[Al-Zahhar] Hamas has no organizational ties to Iran. Hamas does not receive instructions from Iran or any others party. Therefore, this charge is only meant to satisfy the prevailing political trend in the world, which accuses Iran of being responsible for everything. Was it Iran that instructed the PA to open fire on Palestinian citizens who were praying last Friday? If they had not opened fire on the worshipers on Friday, nothing would have happened, unless Iran had given instructions to those who opened fire. Therefore, this charge is not true. Let's be more objective when dealing with the events.

PA Official on Death Sentence, Election Offer

TA2511082094 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 25 Nov 94

[Telephone interview with Sufyan Abu-Zayidah, Palestinian Authority official in charge of the Israeli desk, in Gaza, by correspondents Ge'ula Even and Ya'aqov Eylon, in the studios—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Eylon] What would happen if a person like the terrorist Badarna were actually executed?

[Abu-Zayidah] I do not believe that this specific case is the issue. The act itself is important. I believe that Israeli public opinion wants to see some new way of dealing with the recently very frequent terror attacks. I believe, however, that this is revenge. It is not a new way of dealing with the issue nor is it a step that would or could help to attain the goal.

[Eylon] Do you not think it would deter others?

[Abu-Zayidah] Absolutely not. Not only will it not help, it will even increase the frequency of the terror acts. That is to say that a person who is willing to put explosives on his body and blow himself up will certainly not be deterred by a death sentence, while others may use this sentence as a pretext for more attacks.

[Even] The sentence, however, was passed on a despicable murderer who committed an abhorrent crime, killing five and injuring 30 people in Hadera. If the judges were shocked enough to issue a death sentence, why should it not be carried out despite the claim that it may not deter others?

[Abu-Zayidah] Then, it would not be a punishment; it would be revenge. Punishment is meant to deter, and you must agree with me that this is not deterrence.

[Even] Is a prison term enough?

[Abu-Zayidah] Make no mistake: Prison is no hotel. Prison is harder than death. I spent 12 years in prison, and I know what I am talking about. I often prayed to die there.

[Eylon] Earlier in our cast we reported that Rabin is willing to consider holding elections in the territories now, if a three-day withdrawal of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] from populated areas is made possible, and that they would return after elections are held. What is your reaction?

[Abu-Zayidah] Elections as such are a Palestinian goal, and we hope we will attain it shortly. At the same time, the IDF redeployment in the West Bank is no less important. I do not believe it is practical for the army to move out for three or four days during which elections are held, and then return. I believe it is good that Prime Minister Rabin is thinking about the elections, but he should think about the redeployment of the IDF.

[Eylon] Why not hold elections first, if only to bolster 'Arafat's status, if he wins, and discuss redeployment later?

[Abu-Zayidah] 'Arafat's status is important to us, but it is more important that Israel withdraw from the West Bank.

[Even] It is one week after last Friday's [18 November] riots in Gaza; will today pass quietly in view of the enhanced Palestinian police presence?

[Abu-Zayidah] Based on the indications we have and agreements we made with the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leadership that no marches or demonstrations will be held and no provocative elements, such as veiled persons or firearms will be present.... [pauses] Also, they have a rally today in the al- Shaja'iyah neighborhood in the memory of 'Imad 'Aqil, who was killed last year....

[Even, interrupting] And they promised to hold no rally later....

[Abu-Zayidah, interrupting] A rally will be held, but we have agreed that there will be no provocations.

[Even] Thank you, Mr. Abu-Zayidah.

Hamas Leader Threatens Israel After Verdict

JN2511073694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 25 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Occupied Palestine—An Israeli military court in Janin, in the occupied West Bank, yesterday sentenced to death Palestinian citizen Sa'id Badarinah, a 24-year-old member of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement. He is a resident of Ya'bad in the Janin district.

The court charged Badarinah with planning to carry out an operation at the central bus station in Hadera approximately six months ago. Five people were killed and 30 others were wounded in the operation. Prior to the verdict, Badarinah said he does not regret what he did and that this operation will not be the last.

One of Hamas' leaders threatened Israel, saying it will pay a dear price for the death verdict issued by the Israeli court against Hamas member Sa'id Badarinah yesterday for planning a suicide attack on an Israeli bus. 'Imad

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Faluji, a Hamas leader in the Gaza Strip, said this Israeli policy will encourage the Hamas Movement to carry out more suicide attacks against the occupation forces.

Hamas, PA Reach 'Temporary Agreement'

TA2411084894 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Nov 94 p 1

[Report by Jon Immanuel]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] A temporary agreement has been reached between the Palestinian Authority [PA] and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] which is intended to lessen tension before tomorrow's planned Hamas rally in Gaza.

"All the parties in Gaza have agreed on the need to abstain from all displays of armed provocations," said a statement released by mediators in Gaza.

Two of the mediators, Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, of the Arab Israeli Islamic Movement, and 'Arafat adviser Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, said that under the accord only Palestinian police will be allowed to carry arms in public during demonstrations.

"This is a partial and limited agreement to bypass the expected problems of the next few days," said Hamas spokesman Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar. "Nobody with guns, including the police, will be allowed in the area of Friday's memorial rally."

But he stressed that Hamas has not agreed to the make up of either of the committees set up by Yasir 'Arafat to investigate last week's riots. The PA has officially put the number of dead at 12. [passage omitted]

Fatah Figures Meet in Gaza, Issue Statement

JN2411093694 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0847 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Leading figures in the Fatah Movement have held an expanded meeting in Gaza under His Excellency Yasir 'Arafat, head of the Palestinian National Authority.

His excellency presented a detailed report on the circumstances surrounding the regrettable events that occurred last Friday in Gaza. His excellency reviewed the series of steps and measures taken to deal with the events and their consequences.

His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat praised the efforts exerted by the mediation committee. He stressed that he is keen on establishing democratic relationships among all the children of the one people and their factions and political forces.

His excellency noted the critical and sensitive nature of the situation, which requires a calm and responsible treatment within the framework of national unity and respect for law and order to provide security to citizens, their institutions, and facilities.

His excellency stressed that the Palestinian people and their National Authority and the Palestine National Liberation Movement, Fatah, are now passing a historic test that will determine the people's present and future.

He said: The world is watching us with great interest. We must succeed in this experiment in order to provide a decent life for our people.

A large number of senior leaders and cadres from Fatah spoke during the meeting. They stressed the need for the Fatah Movement to shoulder its national responsibilities since Fatah has had the honor to patronize and lead the Palestinian national struggle. The conferees stressed that Fatah, which has offered many sacrifices through the various stages of the national struggle, seeks to achieve national unity in order to confront the challenges and ward off the threats against our people.

The conferees said that the Fatah Movement, which believes in democracy and political and intellectual pluralism in our Palestinian society, will not allow anyone to violate this civilized heritage. The Fatah Movement will do its utmost to establish such a course in its relations with its people and their political forces.

The leading Fatah figures attending the meeting made a number of decisions on organizational matters and decided on certain measures. The movement's specialized committees were charged with implementing these decisions.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the leading Fatah figures issued a statement in which they stressed Fatah's support for the Palestinian National Authority to enable it to perform its role under very difficult circumstances and the most savage challenges to complete its legitimate national objectives and establish our national Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

Hamas Claims Fatah Hawks Violated Agreement

JN2411185894 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1801 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible source in the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, issued a press statement today on the Fatah Hawks' violation of the agreement reached by the mediation committee, saying:

At a time when the Hamas Movement has demonstrated a favorable response to the mediation efforts to avert further serious repercussions on the Palestinian house by endorsing a partial and phased agreement in this regard—the agreement which stipulates that all parties, chief among which is the 'Arafat authority, must refrain from all provocative and military manifestations on the street and from issuing leaflets or statements, or painting graffiti containing threats—an armed group affiliated with the Fatah Hawks violated this agreement at 1040 today when it carried out provocative acts in the Sabrah neighborhood in Gaza City.

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The source added: Plainclothes people as well as Palestinian security men were seen firing in the air.

The responsible source in the Hamas Movement went on to say that the Hamas Movement condemns this irresponsible act, and holds the 'Arafat authority fully responsible for the consequences.

The responsible source in the Hamas Movement concluded by saying that the Hamas Movement believes that the demagoguery and provocation to which our people have been exposed under the very nose of the 'Arafat authority, and at times with the protection of its personnel, betray an implicit desire on the part of this authority to heighten tension in order to promote dire consequences that are bound to serve the interests of the occupation authority and its agents.

Hamas Claims Death of 3 Israeli Soldiers in Gaza

JN2411191094 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondents have reported that the valiant men of the heroic Gaza Strip this morning detonated an explosive charge along the Palestinian-Egyptian borders in Rafah when a Zionist military patrol vehicle was passing there, killing three Zionist soldiers and wounding others.

Reliable sources informed our correspondents that the charge consisted of at least six hand grenades. The charge went off when the Zionist soldiers stopped to check a strange body planted by our valiant men there. Eyewitnesses confirmed the arrival of a Zionist enemy helicopter at the operation site to transport the Zionists' killed and wounded. In the meantime, the enemy troops closed the area to the news media.

The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, claimed responsibility for the heroic operation in a statement it has issued.

In its statement, Hamas said: The al-Qassam Battalions will continue to honor the martyrs' blood. As for their bullets, they will never be directed against the chests of our people's sons.

Many of our kinsfolk in Khirbat al-'Adas, north of Rafah, reported that they had heard a huge explosion near the Zionist settlement of Morag at 0130 today. This explosion was followed by intensive salvos of bullets that lasted several minutes.

In a separate development, the valiant men upholding armed struggle carried out another operation last night when they opened fire at a Zionist enemy position along the Palestinian-Egyptian borders. Immediately afterward, the 'Arafat police, along with the Zionist enemy troops, carried out a large-scale combing and search operation along the Palestinian-Egyptian borders in western Gaza Strip. Meanwhile, the 'Arafat policemen continued to storm houses in the Tall al-Sultan neighborhood in Rafah in search of the valiant assailants.

'Arafat Receives Prince of Asturias Prize

LD2411203294 Madrid TVE Internacional Television in Spanish 1754 GMT 24 Nov 94

[Speech by Yasir 'Arafat at the Campoamor Theater in Oviedo after jointly receiving the Prince of Asturias Prize for International Cooperation with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin—live; 'Arafat speaks in Arabic with superimposed Spanish translation]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: Allow me to express my happiness at being with you in the Kingdom of Spain, for we hold it in great esteem and respect, and we are linked to Spain by the strongest bonds of brotherhood, as a reflection of the depth of the culture and civilization between the two countries [sentence as heard]. [passage omitted]

I am pleased to express my gratitude to the members of the jury for awarding me this prize, with Prime Minister Rabin. [passage omitted]

Your Royal Highness, I thank you for giving me this prize, of which I am proud, because I consider it a great tribute to the Palestinian people and its martyrs, its injured and its detainees, to all those who took part in the achievement of the peace of the brave, to our children and your children, to our future and yours, so that they might live in peace, security, and stability, in the homeland of peace, the Holy Land.

I believe that this prize represents great support for the loyal efforts that we are making to achieve a just, lasting, and total peace in the region, based on good-neighborliness, peaceful coexistence, and collaboration—a peace that will guarantee to all the peoples and states of the region their security, rights, and future, and guarantee our Palestinian people the exercising of their legitimate national rights, in particular, their right to self- determination and to exercise their sovereignty in their homeland, in their holy places, and to establish their independent Palestinian state and its holy, Arab capital Jerusalem, and fulfill all their international resolutions, especially Resolutions 242 and 338, on which the peace process is based.

Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: In spite of the great obstacles and problems that the Palestinian National Authority has to face, especially those relating to the rebuilding of the infrastructure destroyed during the years of occupation, we have been able to establish the foundations of the Palestinian Authority. Our institutions and ministries have begun to exercise their functions and to direct the affairs of citizens, applying the programs for the future, and also carrying out their tasks as regards security and order, establishing a democratic society. All of this (?indicates) that the Palestinian people have opted for peace as a strategic objective and wish to establish the foundations of a peace based on justice and indicates the

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decision of our Palestinian people to build their homeland. We look forward to the future, with hearts full of hope and wish to make this land our holy homeland. We look forward to the future with hearts full of hope and determination to make our holy land, to make it an oasis of faith and peace, freedom and prosperity.

One of the most important ways of strengthening peace and guaranteeing its continuity until its objectives are achieved is to enable the Palestinian people to freely elect their representatives and parliamentarians by means of fair elections with international supervision, so that these representatives of the people can freely exercise their responsibilities and fulfill the difficult functions awaiting them. The election process is linked to the process of handing over responsibilities in the rest of the Palestinian territories; hence the urgent, basic need to complete the execution of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles and the Cairo Agreement, in order to be able to extend the structure of the Palestinian National Authority to all the Palestinian territories.

The special, unique place that Jerusalem occupies in the hearts of all Palestinians, Muslims, Christians, and Jews prompts me to refer to it here, so that all of us, Palestinians and Israelis, Muslims, Christians, and Jews might work, strengthening the sacred importance of Jerusalem, to turn it into a center radiating peace, harmony, and hope.

The progress of the peace process must be reflected in the daily life of our Palestinian people and the Palestinian man must feel the change so that his support and his promotion of the peace process will increase. Our hope is great, very great, that international society will begin to bear its ethical, moral, political, and human responsibilities to our people, which has suffered and is still suffering many great difficulties, and step up and speed up its efforts for the rebuilding of the infrastructure, enabling us to assure a better life for our Palestinian people, who aspire to have a prosperous, stable future for the generations to come, so that our country can live peacefully and freely like the rest of the peoples of the planet, live together on the basis of justice, democracy, equality, and dignity. In order that our people can live freely and peacefully like the rest of the peoples of the world and live together on the basis of justice, democracy, equality, and national and human dignity, and in order to remove all the difficulties that arise and hinder the course of peace, the path sanctions and requires [as heard] what comes in the Cairo Agreement, and it is the most just and correct path to achieve the desired peace.

Your Majesty, Your Highness, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you with all my heart, on my own behalf, and on behalf of my Palestinian people, and we promise to continue the peace operation, the peace of the brave in the land of peace, the Holy Land, in Palestine. I thank you and peace be with you. [applause]

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Meetings Held With Russian Parliamentary Delegates

Al-Sahhaf Seeks Expanded Ties

JN2311183794 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1440 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 23 Nov (INA)—Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf today met with a Russian parliamentary delegation led by Ramil Nozvig Mirsav {name as transliterated}, chairman of the Arab relations committee at the Russian Parliament, the Duma.

During the meeting, the foreign minister reiterated Iraq's desire to promote and expand the Iraqi-Russian ties of friendship and cooperation, which are based on political understanding and mutual interests. He indicated that the enhancement of Iraqi-Russian and Arab-Russian ties is bound to promote the interests of all in the Arab homeland and Russia.

The minister explained the latest developments in the relationship between Iraq and the UN Security Council [UNSC], as well as the efforts under way between Iraq on the one hand and Russia and most UNSC members on the other to ensure the implementation of Paragraph 22 of UNSC Resolution 687 as soon as possible, which would result in the revocation of the economic sanctions clamped on Iraq.

For his part, Ramil Mirsav, head of the Russian parliamentary delegation, expressed the Russian Federation's firm desire to enhance its ties with Iraq in all areas. He also underscored Russia's active efforts to revoke the unfair sanctions clamped on Iraq in order to put a quick end to the sufferings experienced by the Iraqi people, particularly children and women.

The Russian official added that he, along with other members of his delegation, will explain to their Russian parliamentary colleagues and the parties they represent the Iraqi people's sufferings, which are caused by the unfair sanctions that have cruelly affected the Iraqis' lives.

Mirsav noted that the Russian Parliament's members are fully convinced that Iraq has fulfilled its international obligations, and that the UNSC must lift the embargo imposed on it.

The meeting was attended by the head of the Third Political Department at the Foreign Ministry and the Russian ambassador in Baghdad.

Health Minister on Peoples' 'Suffering'

JN2411134594 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] (Ramil Nozvig Mirsav), head of the group of Russian Duma deputies for contacts with Arab countries [title as heard], has called for lifting the unjust blockade imposed on Iraq. During a meeting today with Health Minister Dr. Umid Midhat Mubarak, (Mirsav) said: We have every reason to believe that Iraq has fulfilled its commitments toward the UN Security Council resolutions, and that the council should lift the blockade.

During the meeting, the health minister reviewed the suffering of the Iraqi people as a result of the continued unjust blockade and its impact on the health services offered to citizens. He noted an increased mortality rate, especially among children, as a result of the acute shortage of food and medicine.

Republican Guard Commander Said Removed From Post

NC2311164994 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Military sources in Baghdad say Staff Lieutenant General Muhammad Ibrahim 'Abd-al-Sattar, commander of the Republican Guard Forces, has been relieved of his post and assigned to the Defense Ministry.

This step was reportedly prompted by 'Abd-al-Sattar's mistakes, when he was instructed to withdraw the military units mobilized by the Iraqi regime in southern Iraq. The sources noted that several accidents involving military vehicles occurred during the withdrawal, leaving many personnel dead in the chaos and panic.

Clandestine Radio Says 70,000 Deserted Army

JN2311215594 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Arrivals in Amman from Iraq report that the number of army deserters have increased recently despite the regime's repressive and vindictive measures which are applied against army deserters. Arrivals say more than 70,000 men have fled the Iraqi Army over the past few months, a large number of whom sought refuge in the southern areas, especially the marshlands and the liberated areas of Kurdistan.

Arrivals say that many soldiers and perhaps officers are looking for an opportunity to flee to safe havens because they have lost all hope in this regime and do not want to continue serving it. Ruthless terror and their fear for their families and children prevent many of them from leaving and saving themselves from these horrible conditions.

Kurdish Students Volunteer as Saddam Commandos

JN2411090394 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 10 Nov 94 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Karkuk (INA)—Students from the Kurdistan Autonomous Region, who are studying in al-Ta'mim Governorate, have expressed their pride in

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the courageous leadership of leader President Saddam Husayn in defense of great Iraq, its unity, and national sovereignty. At a rally organized by the al- Sulaymaniyah Students Council in Karkuk yesterday and attended by the comrade secretary of the Students and Youths Bureau of the Ba'th Party branch in al-Sulaymaniyah, the students announced that they would volunteer in the Saddam Commando Units in defense of the unity and soil of great Iraq.

'Udayy: Countrymen Ready To Die for Saddam

JN2411181594 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 17 Nov 94 p 1

[Article signed " 'Udayy": "Honor"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Americans have come up with another lie and a new fabrication at the UN Security Council. But those who read and know what is beneath the surface clearly understand that their recent allegations in the Security Council are intended to be a message.

So, it seems that they will continue to try to ignore or pretend to forget a lesson, which is important for them, but which for us is a question of faith and destiny, which are inseparable and over which there is no difference or dispute. To the honorable Iraqis, Saddam Husayn represents the entire present and all the hope for the future. He is the savior against a return to the nightmare of yesteryear; namely, subservience to the foreigner, loss of independence on national soil, and Iraq becoming a follower, a mere oil well, or just anything.

They pretended to forget and they will continue to pretend to forget despite their awareness of the truth that Saddam Husayn represents a league of Iraqi elite. Before even getting angry, these men, old and young, are ready to fall one after the other and they will consider that a great honor and pride for them and their families.

These people, therefore, must always be careful and understand that this is a point of death for them, and an undisputed point of no return for us. The men of Iraq are not ready to abandon or concede their honor and great pride. All these values are embodied in one person—Saddam Husayn.

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Peres Denies Argentine President's Remark on Golan

TA2311192594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] At the end of his visit to Damascus, Argentine President Carlos Menem said that he relayed a message to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad from Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres that said Israel is willing to withdraw from the entire Golan Heights from the sake of peace. Speaking at a news conference, Menem said that he received the message from Mr. Peres during their meeting at the UN Headquarters in New York. According to him, peace in the region is undoubtedly very close, closer than could be imagined, and that the Golan will be returned to its owners.

This evening, Foreign Minister Peres denied that he had relayed such a message to al-Asad through Argentine President Menem. During a ceremony at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, our correspondent Gay Qotev asked the foreign minister about the above report, and Mr. Peres replied that he made Israel's unalterable stand clear to Menem, and that this explanation did not include the option of a full withdrawal from the Golan.

'Terrorist' Given First-Ever Death Sentence

TA2411183194 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The first death sentence in the history of Israeli law was issued a short time ago in the military court in Janin. Sa'id Badarna, who was convicted of murder for his role in the terrorist attack on the bus in Hadera six months ago in which six Israelis were killed, was sentenced unanimously. The terrorist said he would be happy to die to attain his objectives. [passage omitted]

In the verdict the three military judges ruled that Badarna did not express regret for his deeds. All he wanted, the judges said, was to kill Jews out of blind hatred. The judges pointed out that Badarna recruited suicide teams to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and gave them military training, including the assemblage of explosive devices. Badarna never volunteered to be a suicide operator. The military prosecutor demanded to sentence Badarna to six death sentences, the equivalent of the murder count of which he was convicted. The judges convicted him unanimously. [passage omitted]

It should be pointed out that the commander of the Central Command is entitled to overrule or change the sentence.

Rabin, MK's, Hamas React

TA2511070094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 25 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said this morning that executing the death sentence handed down to a terrorist would be a mistake. He stressed, however, that he is bound by the legal proceedings. Returning from a trip abroad, the prime minister said that Israel has never executed a terrorist. No government has chosen to do so, and for good reason. This was reported by our correspondent Ilan Ro'e.

The prime minister returned this morning from Spain, where he received the Asturias Prize for International Cooperation and met with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. No details were given on their meeting, but it was termed positive.

Security, Shin Bet, and intelligence sources believe that the death sentence handed last night to the terrorist who planned the Hadera bombing will eventually be canceled. They believe there is no reason to ask for death sentences for terrorists, because they serve as no deterrence. Our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that Israeli Governments have so far been careful not to instruct military prosecutors to ask for death sentences in the military courts, based on the legal opinion of the security elements, the intelligence community, and other elements who believe that such a sentence will not deter anyone and could perhaps have the opposite effect. The prosecution did not ask for a death sentence in the Janin trial yesterday, and the judges made the decision on their own accord.

Shaykh Hamid al-Baytawi, a leading Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activist in Judaea and Samaria, has said that the decision of the Janin Military Court will lead to an intensification of terror attacks against Israel and will further complicate the situation. Speaking to our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem, al-Baytawi suggested that Israel cancel the death sentence for religious, humanitarian, and political reasons and in view of the fact that Israel maintains that it is engaged in a peace process with the Arabs.

Next week, the Knesset plenum will discuss a private member's bill, submitted by National Religious Party's Knesset Member [MK] Hanan Porat, according to which terrorists sentenced to death would not be executed but kept in prison as a government bargaining chip in case an Israeli citizen is kidnapped by terrorists. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the bill was drafted and presented some 40 days ago during the kidnapping affair of soldier Nahshon Wachsman. MK Porat says he consulted rabbis and legal experts and learned that there is no moral flaw in this bill. He claims that it can be implemented in the current case, even before it becomes a state law.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 25 November carries a pool report on reactions by Israeli politicians to the sentence, adding: "Moledet MK Rehav'am Ze'evi demands that the sentence not be changed and that it be executed rapidly," saying it is correct and just. Likud MK Tzahi Hanegbi says this sentence corresponds with the Israeli public's sentiment, urging the army "not to be afraid to execute the sentence

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and not surrender to political pressures from the left and perhaps from the government." Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan says that "the death sentence is correct but not practical in Israel due to the risks its execution entails."

["Meretz MK Dedi Zucker calls on the military prosecution to appeal the sentence because it had not asked for a death sentence. HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] MK Tamar Gozansky says that the revolt we feel in the face of monstrous terror acts should not be expressed in draconian sentences that would only yield a dangerous chain reaction.

["Also, there was a surprising reaction by Ora Namir, labor and social welfare minister: She believes that the murderers should get what they deserve," saying it would deter their parents and associates. Labor MK Avraham Burg is certain that the sentence will be canceled in principle, saying it is "a shameful sentence that stands in contradiction to Jewish tradition."]

Rabin Offers PA Elections, 3-Day IDF Pullout

TA2511071394 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 25 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] We have a new political headline—an interesting new Israeli offer regarding the elections for the Palestinian Authority [PA]. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is willing to consider the possibility of holding elections in the territories now, if the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] units evacuate the Arab population centers for three days only. A senior source on Rabin's plane, who returned from Spain this morning with the prime minister after meeting Yasir 'Arafat last night, stressed that the issue was not raised in the Rabin-'Arafat meeting. Our political correspondent Udi Segal, who accompanied Rabin on his tour, also returned to Israel this morning:

[Begin recording] [Segal] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is willing to consider the option of holding elections in the territories now, provided that the IDF withdraws from the Arab population centers in Judaea and Samaria for only three days and returns to its posts immediately after the vote. A senior source on Rabin's plane, however, said that the option was not raised in the discussion with 'Arafat in Spain yesterday.

The two held a tete-a-tete meeting and discussed the sensitive situation in the Gaza Strip and ways of dealing with the problems. The discussion mainly dealt with daily affairs pertaining to the continuation of the peace process. The two refused to reveal any details of their discussion.

[Rabin, in English] I do not have to add to what we discussed among ourselves.

['Arafat, in English] But we can say that it was positive and fruitful. [passage omitted] [end recording]

We have an initial Palestinian reaction to Rabin's new idea: A senior PA source said this morning that Rabin's offer contradicts the Declaration of Principles. The source said that, according to the terms set forth in the agreement and not according to Rabin's terms, the elections should have been held a long time ago.

Knesset Defeats Bill on Stopping Talks With PLO

TA2311180094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] This afternoon, a majority of Knesset members defeated a private bill submitted by Likud MK [Knesset member] Tzahi Hanegbi which says Israel must discontinue negotiations with the PLO if it fails to cancel the Palestinian Covenant. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that 38 MK's voted against the bill, 30 voted for, and 2 SHAS [Torah Observing Shepardim] MK's abstained.

Islamic Movement Head on Hamas-PA Agreement

TA2411085194 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 24 Nov 94

[Telephone interview with Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, head of the Islamic Movement in Israel, by correspondents 'Arad Nir and Mikhal Gazit; place not given—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Nir] Good morning to Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, the head of the Islamic Movement in Israel.

[Darwish] And a very good morning to you.

[Nir] Does the very fact that an interim agreement has been achieved serve as an indication of Hamas' [Islamic Resistance Movement] readiness to accept Yasir 'Arafat's authority in the autonomous areas?

[Darwish] I think that the agreement of both parties to reach an interim agreement shows that the Palestinian opposition, led by the Islamic Movement in the occupied territories, recognizes the existence of the Palestinian Authority [PA]. This is proved by the fact that Hamas requested a permit for Friday's [25 November] demonstration. I see this as a clear recognition of the PA, and the PA, by granting a license, has also recognized the opposition.

[Nir] You are referring of course to tomorrow's demonstration?

[Darwish] Yes, on Friday.

[Nir] How will the demonstration proceed in your assessment?

[Darwish] I think the agreement stipulates that things must be conducted in an orderly fashion. We discussed this matter all night, because in our opinion this is the real test. [passage omitted]

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[Nir] Shaykh Darwish, are there any secret clauses to last night's document of understandings? Could you reveal some as yet unknown details?

[Darwish] These reports are to a great extent untrue. There are no secret clauses or agreements. I can state unequivocally that we stand behind every word of the agreement as reported by the media. [passage omitted]

Rabin Speech on Receiving Prince of Asturias Prize

LD2411212794 Madrid TVE Internacional Television in Spanish 1808 GMT 24 Nov 94

[Speech by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin at the Campoamor Theater in Oviedo after jointly receiving the Prince of Asturias Prize for International Cooperation with Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat—live; Rabin speaks in English with superimposed Spanish translation; transcribed from English]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Your Majesty, his royal highness, my fellow recipients of the distinguished prize of the Prince of Asturias, distinguished guests: We have almost exhausted all the words in the lexicon of peace. When the festivals draw to their end, after all the prizes have been awarded and the trumpets remain silent, we must return to the harsh reality of everyday life.

We, Chairman 'Arafat and myself, are trying to change this reality in the Middle East. We have to work sometimes against human nature, which seeks vengeance. We try to turn foe to friend, try to move the hands of time forward, and above all not to look back. For behind us we have left 100 years soaked in blood. We have left graveyards, we have left bereaved families. We have left disabled in body and soul. We have left a conflict that no one believed and still many do not believe can be brought to an end. I believe that we can live another way. I believe that Chairman 'Arafat is of the same mind that men can live in another way. Enough of hostility which knows no end. If we did not believe this we would not stand here together this evening to be awarded this distinguished prize, the prize of the Prince of Asturias. A prize which we receive gratefully, on the behalf of both of our peoples and for their sake.

Tomorrow is Friday. In the mosques Muslims will pray at noon. In the synagogues Jews will welcome the Sabbath in the evening. We are here on this stage before you in Spain and we pray for those worshipers of both religions. We pray for their peace and welfare. We pray that the peace process that we have embarked on over a year ago will succeed. It is in its early stages, vulnerable, fragile, and we have to protect it, for the alternative is too [word indistinct] to even contemplate.

Ladies and gentlemen, from here, from Spain, from the Madrid peace conference, we have set off on this journey from which there can be no return, and which we shall continue despite the many enemies of peace. We knew 100 years of bloodshed would not be wiped out by a single handshake. We knew that bitter memories do not vanish with a smile before a camera. But we did not believe just how bitter would be those enemies of peace. We shall fight and prevent them from continuing to carry out bloodshed, death, hatred, suffering, and agony. And we simply want it to be otherwise. We shall continue to seek a life of harmony, a life of equality, a life of peace. We hope that all the peoples of the civilized world, including the Spanish people, will come to our assistance. Poverty and famine are also the strident enemies of our common dream. All assistance to the peoples seeking peace, the Israelis, and the Palestinian people, is a blessing for us all. An investment in peace is an investment in life.

Ladies and gentlemen, we shall continue. This strip of land in Spain has known wars, battles, and bloodshed and has lived now for generations in peace. The people see a blessing in their lives. Here from Asturias we return tomorrow to our different homes, to our different prayers, to our mosques, and to our synagogues, but also to our common dream. [passage omitted]

Border Guard Shoots Illegal Immigrant From Egypt

NC2411211994 Paris AFP in English 2056 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, Nov 24 (AFP)—An Israeli border guard on Thursday [24 November] shot and wounded an illegal immigrant from Egypt who was driving a stolen car, a police spokesman said.

"When border guards asked for his papers, he tried to escape but smashed into their jeep. One of the guards opened fire and slightly wounded him with two bullets in the arm," spokesman Eric Bar Chen told AFP.

The incident took place in the Israeli Arab village of western al-Biqa', north of Tel Aviv.

The unidentified Egyptian, who had no papers, would stand trial and could be expelled if another country agreed to take him in, Bar Chen said.

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Israel Said To Build Embassy Near U.S. Mission

JN2411100494 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 24 Nov 94 p 20

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel has decided to build its Amman embassy close to the Embassy of the United States, its organic and strategic ally. The area of the land that was bought is huge, some six donums [6,000 square meters] and the selling price was 3 million dinars, paid in cash in the U.S. dollar equivalent. The lucky owner of that piece of land has already transferred ownership to the State of Israel.

Cabinet Sets Up Four Treaty Committees

JN2311152694 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] In implementation of the provisions of the peace treaty signed between the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Government of the State of Israel, and upon the recommendation of the prime minister, the Council of Ministers has approved the formation of four committees to follow up on the peace treaty implementation.

I. The Jordanian Consultants Steering Committee for the peace process will be formed as follows:

1. Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, chairman.
2. Dr. Hani al-Mulqi.
3. Dr. 'Abdallah Tuqan.
4. Ambassador 'Awn al-Khasawinah.
5. Dr. Mundhir Haddadin.
6. Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir.

II. The Jordanian side to the joint Jordanian-Israeli committee to follow up the implementation of the peace treaty will be formed as follows:

1. Dr. Hani al-Mulqi, secretary general of the Higher Council of Science and Technology, chairman.
2. Dr. Ibrahim Badran.
3. The secretary general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade.
4. The secretary general of the Ministry of the Interior.
5. The Secretary general of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.
6. The secretary general of the Ministry of Planning.
7. The Jordanian ambassador to the State of Israel
8. The assistant chief of staff for intelligence.
9. The economic secretary at the Prime Ministry.

Members from the above-mentioned Jordanian ministries and establishments, or members from other ministries and establishments, will take part in the committee's work in light of the issues discussed.

III. The Jordanian committee for following up on the implementation of the peace treaty will be formed as follows:

1. Dr. Hani al-Mulqi, the secretary general of the Higher Council of Science and Technology, chairman.
2. The secretary general of the Ministry of Municipal, Rural, and Environment Affairs.
3. The secretary general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade.
4. The secretary general of the Ministry of Agriculture.
5. The secretary general of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Wealth.
6. The secretary general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
7. The secretary general of the Ministry of the Interior.
8. The secretary general of the Ministry of Finance
9. The secretary general of the Ministry of Planning
10. The secretary general of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.
11. The secretary general of the Ministry of Tourism.
12. The secretary general of the Ministry of Justice.
13. The secretary general of the al-'Aqabah Region Authority.
14. The director general of the Jordanian Ports Corporation.
15. The deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Jordan.
16. The director general of the Telecommunications Corporation.
17. The assistant chief of staff for intelligence.
18. The economic secretary at the Prime Ministry.

IV. The Jordanian side at the Jordan Rift Valley Development Steering Committee will be formed as follows:

1. Dr. Mundhir Haddadin, chairman.
2. The secretary general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade.
3. The secretary general of the Ministry of Agriculture.
4. The secretary general of the Ministry of Planning.
5. The secretary general of the Jordan Valley Authority.
6. The secretary general of the Jordanian Ports Corporation.
7. The director general of the Jordanian Electricity Authority.
8. The director of the special office at the Foreign Ministry.

The Council of Ministers has also authorized the prime minister to introduce changes to the above-mentioned committees and to set up and effect changes to competent committees provided for in the peace treaty.

Jordan-Israel Transport Committee Ends Talks

JN2311155394 Amman Radio Jordan Network in English 1200 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Jordanian-Israeli Transport Committee has concluded two days of talks at al-'Aqabah's Coral Beach Hotel.

The two sides discussed cooperation in aviation, and the air corridor between the two countries. They also dealt on marine transport and tourism. The committee met under the cochairmanship of Director General of the Ports Corporation Durayd Mahasinah, and the Israeli deputy transport minister.

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Iranian Ambassador Says 'Resistance' Must Not Stop

NC2411181594 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz met with Iranian Ambassador to Lebanon Homayun 'Alizadeh and discussed with him bilateral ties and the current status of the peace process.

After the meeting, the Iranian ambassador said that his country opposes halting Lebanese resistance activities as long as the Zionist enemy continues to occupy part of Lebanese territory.

Chamber of Deputies Lifts Shamas' Immunity

NC2411130794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Chamber of Deputies lifted the parliamentary immunity of Deputy Yahya Shamas at 1245 today. Our correspondent in the Chamber has the report:

[Begin unidentified correspondent recording] At 1245 the public prosecution office demand to lift the immunity of Deputy Yahya Shamas, backed by a memorandum from the justice minister, found approval in the Chamber. The Salvation and Change bloc led by Deputy Salim al-Huss and Deputy Najah Wakim abstained from the vote. The Loyalty to the Resistance deputies did not take part in the vote. [passage omitted]

Deputy Shamas strongly criticized the vote and said the file against him was fabricated, blaming recent issues that affected the nature of his relationships with some officials and led to the opening of this file against him. He stressed that he respects and admires the Lebanese judiciary and is ready to present himself to the judiciary when asked to do so. But, he added, his parliamentary immunity was violated five months ago. He stressed that he will not be responsible for whatever happens outside the Chamber, because he believes that he will be taken directly to a police station and then moved elsewhere.

Deputy Shamas said the issue of drugs is a major one and he is neither responsible nor would he shoulder responsibility for it. He said there are senior officials in the state, including ministers and deputies, who are responsible for this file. He gave many examples and asked why the investigation should stop with his file. Chairman Birri objected to this and challenged Deputy Shamas to name those responsible, saying that the Chamber of Deputies is the forum for voicing the truth. Shamas named some officials but went no further. [passage omitted]

Deputy Shamas' immunity was lifted at 1245 and the Chamber then moved to discuss the reports submitted to it on the Puma helicopters deal. [end recording]

Judge Issues Warrant for Arrest

NC2411203494 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The chief investigating judge in al-Biqa', 'Asim Safiy-al-Din, issued a warrant this evening for the arrest of deputy Yahya Shamas for interrogation on the charges against him, including drug trafficking. [passage omitted]

Pro-'Arafat, Opponents Clash in Southern Camp

Machine Guns, Rockets Said Involved

NC2511055394 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0523 GMT 25 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] We have learned that clashes involving the use of machine guns and rockets have been going on in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp in the south since dawn today and are still continuing. We have learned that these clashes specifically involve a group belonging to Munir al-Maqdah, who was loyal to Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat but later dissented with him, and a group belonging to Kamal Midhat, which is loyal to 'Arafat.

Fighting in 'Ayn al-Hulwah Described

NC2511071194 Paris AFP in English 0641 GMT 25 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sidon, Lebanon, Nov 25 (AFP)—At least four people were killed and six wounded in Lebanon's main Palestinian refugee camp early Friday [25 November] during violent clashes between rival factions of PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat's Fatah movement, security officials in south Lebanon said.

The fighting prompted several residents of the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp to flee while Lebanese army troops manning positions outside the compound went on alert, the officials added.

The clashes erupted before dawn when Fatah guerrillas stormed four positions controlled by Khalid al-Shayib, the Fatah military chief in Lebanon who is said to be close to Palestinian forces opposed to negotiations with Israel.

The Fatah guerrillas overran the positions after several hours of clashes with rockets and machine gun fire and were firmly in control by daybreak, security officials and Palestinians in 'Ayn al-Hulwah said.

Several fires broke out in the compound, home to 80,000 Palestinian refugees, and the thuds of exploding rockets echoed across the port city of Sidon.

Residents in Sidon said columns of smoke rose from the camp and intermittent machine gun fire could still be heard several hours later.

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Security officials said at least four people were dead and six wounded but Palestinian sources put the toll at six killed and several injured.

Messages urging the Fatah guerrillas to evacuate the positions were read over mosque loudspeakers while meetings were underway between camp officials to end the violence, Palestinian sources said.

Security sources blamed the fighting on "an internal dispute". They did not elaborate.

'Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation fell out of favour with many refugees in Lebanon after the historic PLO-Israeli handshake of September 13 that led to the signing of the May 4 accord launching autonomy in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

A march was expected to be held later Friday in 'Ayn al-Hulwah to commemorate the death of 12 people in inter-Palestinian fighting last week in Gaza.

After last Friday's killings, several Palestinian refugees here urged Islamic militants to kill 'Arafat.

Factional Fighting Continues in Camp

NC2511110794 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 25 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The clashes in 'Ayn al-Hulwah Camp are still in progress amid contradicting reports coming from 'Arafat supporters and those opposed to the self-rule accord.

While 'Arafat's groups have announced they have taken control of four centers—al-Furn, al-Iqlim near al-Quds Hospital, Abu-Hasan Salamah which is a former meetings venue of the command secretariat of 'Arafat's Fatah, and al-Hajiz al-Tahtani—supporters of Colonel Munir al-Maqdah say they have begun a counterattack to regain their positions.

Colonel Munir al-Maqdah accused Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat of causing the clashes, describing what took place as a new massacre and continuation of what happened in Gaza. He said 'Arafat wants to prove he is strong and plans to turn the battle in his favor by spilling blood. He added that 'Arafat's supporters have brought into the 'Ayn al-Hulwah Camp 100-150 fighters from abroad.

'Arafat supporters announced that they have arrested Abu-'Abd al-Bayruti, who is wanted in connection with scores of crimes, and killed three of his aides.

Infighting Claims More Victims

NC2511151794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1450 GMT 25 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 25 Nov (MENA)—The number of victims of Palestinian infighting in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah Camp in south Lebanon has risen to seven killed and over 20 injured. The armed clashes between Yasir 'Arafat's supporters and opponents are continuing.

The Palestinian Islamic forces and the neutral factions inside the camp are trying to stop the fighting and resolve the issue between the two warring factions, while the Palestinian forces staged a demonstration inside the camp demanding a halt to the fighting.

The warring sides are using loudspeakers to call on each other to leave the camp. Reports say that in contacts with their leaders abroad, 'Arafat's supporters were told to remain in the offices they seized when the fighting began, since these offices originally belonged to the Fatah Movement.

The Lebanese Army has taken stringent security measures around the camp from where the sound of explosions could be heard in the nearby city of Sidon.

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Argentina's Menem Holds News Conference

JN2311204094 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1843 23 Nov 94

[News conference by Argentine President Carlos Menem with foreign and domestic correspondents in Damascus on 23 November—recorded; in Spanish, with sentence by sentence translation into Arabic]

[FBIS Translated Text] [AL-BA'TH editor] Your Excellency President Carlos Menem. We take pride in a president hailing from Syria. We would like to know what it feels like to be among kinsfolk and relatives in your motherland Syria?

[Menem] I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I thank the president of the Syrian Arab Republic and its wonderful people for the warm welcome I have been given. It is not the first time I have visited Syria. I came here with my father in 1964. I returned here in 1972, and again in 1988, and this is my fourth visit. I am impressed by the development Syria has seen over the years. I am gratified to see how the combined will of a government and people can achieve such gains. I have statistics about this development. You have no need for me to give you such figures. As for the emotional side to my visit, I would like to repeat how much I love Syria. Everywhere I have been, be it in commercial places or places of worship, I felt that my parents must have been there before they emigrated to Argentina or after they came to this country, which I consider to be my second homeland. Next to the Italian and Spanish communities, the Arab community in Argentina is the third largest. There are around three million Syrian and Lebanese immigrants or their descendants in Argentina. Our forefathers' blood mixed with new blood. I am the product of such a mix that has made up the wonderful Argentinian people. When I visit this country, I can only express feelings of thanks and gratitude for this land that produced my family and then made it possible for them to travel and then raise a family of four brothers and grandchildren, a family that is attached to the country where it now lives.

[Unidentified correspondent] Your Excellency President Carlos Menem: You have been briefed on Syria's position concerning the peace process during your visit to Damascus. You are also familiar with Israel's position. How do you view the future of the peace process in light of the obstacles being placed by Israel, especially its refusal to withdraw from the territory? Thank you.

[Menem] I view the peace process with immense optimism. There is a decision which has been almost unanimously approved by the nations of the earth; namely, UN Security Council Resolution No. 242 for which Argentina has always voted. This resolution stipulates withdrawal from the occupied Syrian territory and returning it to its owner, Syria. During my recent visit to the United States, I had the opportunity of meeting with Shim'on Peres who asked me to convey a message to President Hafiz al-Asad. I have conveyed this message in which he expresses Israel's full readiness to withdraw from the Golan in order to establish final peace. I have no doubt that this agreement will be reached and that within a very short time, quicker than you may think, the Golan and the occupied Syrian territories will return to their owner. As to how the obstacles, which are clearly there, could be removed, this issue is the prerogative of the sides concerned with this process and the international organizations. The Republic of Argentina is now a member of the Security Council. On 31 January, I will assume the presidency of the Security Council, and I will take part in the negotiations and discussions, and I will do whatever I can to bring views closer. War leads absolutely nowhere. I know that by virtue of the efficient and wise leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, it is possible for these territories to be restored without a drop of blood being shed. Thank you.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency President Carlos Menem: You said today in your speech in the city of Yabrud that Argentine peacekeeping troops are deployed in many regions in the world and that they are ready to be deployed in other regions to keep the peace. Have you, in your discussions here, discussed the prospect of Argentine peacekeeping troops participating in disengaging Syrian and Israeli forces? How willing are you to participate?

[Menem] We are totally willing. The Argentine peacekeeping troops will not achieve peace, but will be dispatched to safeguard peace. Once an agreement is reached in this respect, under the UN auspices, and once the United Nations decides to send troops, then Argentina will send peacekeeping troops. If the United Nations asks for peacekeeping troops, then we will be more than willing to do that. More than 6,000 Argentine troops have been to Croatia, Cyprus, and Kuwait to maintain peace. I want to note here that all those who are sent on peacekeeping missions are not really soldiers, but are officers and noncommissioned officers who choose to go of their own will. This is because an Argentine soldier is he who performs the compulsory military service at the age of 18. At that age, he is not prepared to perform difficult duties at the flash points to which peacekeeping troops are dispatched. I also seize this opportunity to tell you that as of next year, the compulsory military service will be revoked in Argentina. All those who join the Armed Forces after that will do so of their own will and will receive a monthly salary. In addition, those who want to join the Armed Forces can choose to sign a two-year, four-year, or six-year contract provided the person is not over 26 years of age. Am I correct, General? [The Argentine chief of staff answered yes from the audience] We have also allowed women to enroll. I would like to inform you that the number of men and women who expressed a desire to enroll in the ranks of the Armed Forces is almost equally divided. I would also like to tell you that the Armed Forces is a significant employer. Work teaches one how to defend the homeland.

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[Muhammad Khayr al-Wadi, TISHRIN] Your Excellency President Carlos Menem: You have held in-depth talks with His Excellency President Hafiz al- Asad. What were the topics that you addressed? What are the results, particularly with regard to bilateral ties? Moreover, what about the prospects for the promotion of these ties?

[Menem] As a matter of fact, during the past two days, I held talks with the president of the Syrian Arab Republic for more than five hours. The talks were partly private, and partly expanded, involving some ministers from the Syrian republic and some officials and ministers from the Argentine republic. With regard to bilateral ties, these talks have resulted in the signing of a series of agreements, including one agreement on veterinarian science and another one on vegetation. These two agreements provide for extensive cooperation in both areas. Moreover, an agreement was signed between the Argentine Agricultural Technology Institute and the Syrian Ministry of Agriculture. This agreement provides for the exchange of agricultural expertise between the two countries, especially since Argentina has extensive experience in agriculture. For Argentina is rich in its agricultural resources and animal wealth. For example, we will produce almost 36 million tonnes of grain this year. Moreover, we have approximately 60 million cows, and a rich experience in this area. We are willing to transfer all the expertise and technology we have to Syria. It goes without saying that we will learn from Syrian expertise, particularly with regard to agriculture and raising cattle in barren areas. For Syria has a rich experience in this regard. Moreover, a cultural agreement has been signed. This agreement provides for the implementation of a cultural program during the period 1995-97. Likewise, this agreement provides for the exchange of scholarships and teachers, and also for the launching of cinema weeks in both countries.

I have spoken to his excellency the president on many and various topics, which I cannot enumerate at present. Nonetheless, I have noted the important agreements we have reached. Likewise, during our talks, we touched on various international issues, particularly flash points. We have also noted the will of free and peace-loving nations, as well as their desire to achieve peace. Of course, you as Syrians, are well aware that his excellency the president is knowledgeable and well-versed in history, in the old history of the region. We have also explored these issues.

[Correspondent] Mr. President: Prior to your arrival in Syria, you made a statement to the effect that you seek to play an effective role in achieving peace between Israel and Syria. During this news conference, you have noted two points. First, you have noted the possible Argentine contribution to a peacekeeping force. Second, you have spoken of what you will do when Argentina becomes the UN Security Council president. How do you view the special role that Argentina and President Menem can play in this regard? Is there a special role you look forward to play to achieve this objective? Thank you.

[Menem] I would like to reiterate the statements that I have already made. I have communicated to the Syrian Government a message relayed to me by the Israeli foreign minister. His excellency the president of the Syrian Arab Republic has listened to the explanations I have made. He will take what I have communicated to him into account. Apart from that, the future of the peace process is contingent upon the Syrian-Israeli track. If a peace agreement is reached, and if there is a need for peacekeeping forces, Argentina stands ready to contribute to such forces. As for the Security Council, if a certain demand is made, then I will speak positively on this subject so that things will return to what they used to be before the wars that took place in this region. I can sum this up in the principle of land for peace, but this peace should be peace with dignity and should be just and lasting peace.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency Mr President, you said that Argentina will soon assume the presidency of the Security Council. There is an international problem represented in the nuclear weapons and the weapons of mass destruction. What kind of a role Argentina can play with Israel and the United States in order to make Israel sign the treaty on nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which was signed by the countries of the region?

[Menem] You know that the Security Council always adopts resolutions on this subject, but it cannot put forth conditions. Argentina has signed these treaties the same as other countries. The Argentine Governments before my government, for example, used to refuse to sign these agreements, but my government has signed these agreements, and we signed the [word indistinct] treaty which restricts proliferation of nuclear weapons in Latin America. There has been a draft resolution in the Argentine Parliament on signing international agreements concerning this subject. The president told me that Syria has signed all agreements concerning this subject, and we will urge—within the Security Council and the United Nations—that no country be excluded from signing these treaties. We cannot put conditions, and we cannot impose, but we can ask and demand as the international organizations and establishments do.

[Correspondent] What is your comment on Yitzhaq Rabin's statement in which he said that the price Syria asks in return for peace is dear, and Israel is unable to pay this price in comparison with what Shim'on Peres told you and asked you to convey?

[Menem] This is an internal Israeli affair. I do not want to interfere in Israel's internal affairs. I restricted my role to conveying what Shim'on Peres told me to tell the president and his government in the presence of his excellency the foreign minister. In the past, I played the same role in the talks with 'Arafat, Rabin, and Shim'on Peres until they were able to sign the agreements that you know. This is our role, and it is not something new, but as you know the agreements are signed in other countries

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and not in Argentina because Argentina's role is not big in this field, but we add what can be added to this objective.

Menem Departs

JN2311213994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Argentine President Carlos Menem left Damascus this evening, concluding a three-day visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad led the farewell party at Damascus International Airport. [passage omitted]

Israeli Statements on Golan Withdrawal Viewed

'Devious, Deceitful Stand' Assailed

JN2411083494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 24 Nov 94

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its editorial today, TISHRIN comments on Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's statements in Washington. In these statements, Rabin said that the peace Syria wants is different from the peace Israel wants. He also said that he is not prepared to offer new goodwill gestures and that Israel cannot pay the required price for peace on the Syrian track. The paper points out that Rabin's stands demonstrate another Israeli evasion, as well as Israel's insistence on throwing obstacles before the peace process and its clear refusal to withdraw from the Golan. They also indicate Israel's noncommitment to the resolutions of international legitimacy and nonresponse to the bases of the peace process. This means that Israel still insists on wasting and destroying chances to achieve peace.

TISHRIN continues: When Rabin notes the contradiction between the Syrian and Israeli positions, he implicitly admits that Israel still believes that it can sell its phased settlements, separate deals, and partial solutions. The paper says: If we examine the Israeli reference to paying the required price, we will find that Israel views the peace process on the basis of what gains it can reap at the expense of the Arabs and their territory, dignity, and rights.

Concluding, TISHRIN says: When Syria declared that peace is its strategic option, it was fully aware that this peace will not materialize unless Israel fully withdraws from the Golan and southern Lebanon. This is because peace and occupation are direct antitheses.

On the same subject, AL-THAWRAH says Rabin's statements show that Israel continues to adhere to its devious, deceitful stand, evading any commitment to the basic terms and requirements of peace as stipulated in international resolutions. These statements also reflect Israel's insistence on its ideas and erroneous decisions, which have stalemated the peace process and exposed it to the constant danger of failure and collapse. The statements also indicate that Israel wants to circumvent world principles of right and justice and to undermine all hopes pinned on the peace process to achieve peace and security in this region, which has suffered from the woes and tragedies of wars.

The paper expresses amazement at the fact that Rabin, before departing for Washington, said that anyone who believes that peace is possible with Syria without giving back the Golan must be living in a dream world. However, having been reassured about the results of his talks in Washington and having obtained the promises and assurances he wanted on maintaining the level of aid to Israel, Rabin himself went back on his statements, thus placing himself in that dream world. This was evident through his statement that he is not ready to accept the principle of a total, comprehensive withdrawal from the Golan and that he does not intend to acknowledge Syria's legitimate right to regain all its territory that was occupied by force.

The paper says that Christopher, who will arrive in the region on a new tour, will find that Rabin's statements will not help his mission's success. Rather, it will force the mission to face the possibility of failure even before it begins. Christopher will also note the great difference between Syria, which calls for a peace based on justice, comprehensiveness, and the principles of right and justice; and Israel, which thinks only of partial, distorted solutions contradicting the essence of a durable peace.

Israel Seeking 'Own Version of Peace'

JN2511094494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 25 Nov 94

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its editorial today, the newspaper AL-BA'TH discusses the statements made by Israeli officials, particularly Yitzhaq Rabin's recent statements on the peace process and the Syrian track.

Under the headline "The Israeli Illusion," the paper says: These statements by Rabin have brought nothing new apart from the fact that they were made in the United States. As is known, the Israeli Government—despite some embellished statements made by this or that Israeli official—still seeks its own version of peace that will achieve its ambitions and save it from complying with the resolutions of international legitimacy. Syria will continue to reject this.

AL-BA'TH adds: What confirms that Israel still adheres to the policy of expansion at the expense of the Arab territories is the fact that Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres two days ago reaffirmed that his government did not say it was ready for full withdrawal from the Golan. The paper believes that such a position is more than enough to show that Israel is continuing the policy of maneuvering, procrastination, and defiance of

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the international community. This community emphasizes that establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the region requires the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy.

AL-BA'TH asserts that Syria wants a just and comprehensive peace that will regain all Arab rights and preserve the dignity of the Arabs. Israel, however, wants both land and peace. It seeks a kind of peace that conforms to its new-old plans and objectives.

Concluding its editorial, AL-BA'TH says: Israel should understand that real peace, as demanded by the whole world, can only be attained through a comprehensive settlement that will regain all Arab rights in full.

Discussing the same issue, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says in one commentary: Israel once again tries to shuffle the cards in the peace process. Since the Madrid conference convened, we have not yet heard the words full withdrawal from any Israeli official. Meanwhile, the Israeli officials have always demanded normalization of relations.

AL-THAWRAH adds: All this circumvents the realities and bases of peace. The separate and unbalanced agreements have embodied this fact because Israel has evaded the international resolutions. All results of the regional events in the occupied Arab territories confirm that Israel does not want a just and comprehensive peace. This is because Israel clings to its occupation of the Arab territories.

Concluding its commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: Rabin's remarks on the so-called exceptional initiative and good intentions can only be such if he declares commitment to full withdrawal. Anything else will be an illusion and a waste of time, effort, and opportunity.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: The Israeli officials have made hardline statements on the Golan. These statements, which reject the principle of full and comprehensive withdrawal, have once again posed many questions and queries about the peace process and the credibility of the Israeli side toward peace, especially since the past three years were characterized by Israel's intransigence and were replete with various Israeli maneuvers. All this indicates that Israel evades the requirements of peace and circumvents the terms of reference and mechanisms of peace, which are represented by full implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy. Syria agreed on these resolutions and joined the Madrid conference on their basis.

AL-THAWRAH asserts that peace has its own terms of reference, pillars, and basic conditions, led by full and comprehensive Israeli withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and the remainder of the occupied Arab territories and the return to the 4 June 1967 lines. Any infringement of these pillars and conditions and any attempt to circumvent them and overburden the peace process are tantamount to deliberate insistence on killing the peace opportunities and undermining all efforts and roads to peace.

Concluding, the paper says: Now that Israel is responsible for the consequences, the U.S. cosponsor and partner is equally responsible for the Tel Aviv rulers' continued game of obstruction, maneuvering, and wasting time, as well as for failing to take decisive positions that can halt the continued Israeli evasion, rectify the path of the [political] settlement, and force Israel into withdrawing from all occupied Arab territories.

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Afghanistan

President Issues Decree on Refugees' Property

LD2311225094 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The Press Office of the Presidency has reported to the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY that the following decree has been issued by the president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan on the procedure for putting estates under security, and the status of estates whose owners have left the country for various reasons since 1978:

The following provisions have been approved on the basis of the principle of legality and Shara'i justice, and in paying respect to the individuals' property to prevent the use of force and violation of other people's rights by irresponsible people, and in consideration of the state's obligation to safeguard the subjects' interests and to safeguard the legal and Shara'i rights of ownership of immovable property and assets of those compatriots who have left the country for various reasons since 1978, having no legal heir or Shara'i representative in the country:

1. The National Security Department, in cooperation with the Kabul Municipality and the Ministry of City and House Construction, has the duty to specify all estates having no caretaker, and hand over the list of these estates to the special National Security Prosecution Office.

2. The Special National Security Prosecution Office is assigned to assess and carefully consider ownership documents of the people embodied in Article I of this decree; and to pass on possession to the owner or legal or Shara'i heir of those estates whose legal heir or Shara'i representatives are present. The estates having no caretaker can be put under security after a careful study, and after obtaining an order from the Special National Security Court.

a. On behalf of the state, the Special National Security Prosecution Office is permitted to rent out to needy people the estates that have been put under security by the order of a court, until such time as the owner or the legal heir or Shara'i representative appears.

b. The rent money embodied in Clause A, is to be deposited in a bank account that has been opened for this purpose.

4. [As heard] Priority rights will be given to the one who is already living in the house, apartment, dwelling, or a residential unit.

5. When the genuine owner appears, the estate will be taken out of security, in accordance with the court's order and legal documents; the possession, together with the money compiled from the rent, will be passed on to the owner. 6. The Special National Security Prosecution Office is assigned to carefully consider complaints by Kabul citizens regarding usurpation of estates and to follow the procedure for distinguishing forged documents; and to take necessary action to establish the complainant's legitimate right.

7. The Special National Security Prosecution Office is duty-bound to implement this decree and report the result of its action to the Legal Safeguard and Public Rights Department of the Presidency.

8. The decree is to be enforced from the date of its assent and is to be published in the official gazette and other mass media.

[Signed] Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan

Iran

Police Discover Bombs Smuggled From Iraq

Several Suspects Arrested

NC2311184794 Paris AFP in English 1422 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov 23 (AFP)—Police in northwestern Iran have recently discovered several bombs smuggled by rebels from Iraq, the official Islamic republic news agency IRNA reported Wednesday [23 November].

An intelligence official, quoted by IRNA, said the rebels intended to set off the bombs in "sensitive" regions of the country on Tuesday.

The bombs were discovered in West Azerbaijan province, he said.

Police arrested several suspects following the discovery and seized a number of weapons and ammunition, the official added. He did not specify the number of people arrested and bombs discovered, nor the places to have been targetted.

The West Azerbaijan province, bordering Iraq and Turkey, is home to a Kurdish minority and a scene of frequent attacks attributed to Iranian Kurdish rebels opposed to the Islamic regime here. Iranian warplanes raided a Kurdish rebel base inside Iraqi territory earlier this month after accusing the guerrillas of launching cross-border attacks.

Security Forces Efforts Noted

LD2311185894 Tehran IRNA in English 1545 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Orumiyeh, W. Azarbaijan Prov., Nov. 23, (IRNA)—Several TNT explosive devices were recently discovered in this northwestern province, a security official announced here Tuesday [22 November].

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The official, who is a director general at the provincial information department, said that counterrevolutionary elements intended to plant the bombs, smuggled into Iran from Iraq by a number of bandits, at sensitive centers across the country.

Thanks to efforts made by the security forces, some people have been arrested and a large quantity of arms and ammunition seized from them, the official said. The officials made the remarks at the end of a three-day exhibition held to display plots of enemies of the Islamic revolution.

Ayatollah Kashani Friday Prayers Reported

LD2511111994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] In the Friday prayers which were held in Tehran simultaneously with the rest of the country, the acting Friday imam of Tehran Ayatollah [Mohammad] Emami-Kashani honored the lofty position of women in the first prayer sermon, referring to the pure character of Her Holiness Fatimah Zahra [the prophet's daughter], peace be upon her, in its divine and human aspects. He called on the women of the country to always regard the life of that illustrious lady as a model in their lives.

Referring to the Basij Week, the acting Friday imam of Tehran said: The basij [popular mobilization force] is a force that guards divine values with all its being. The enemies of Islam are afraid of the basijis due to their intense sensitivity for implementing their religious duties.

Ayatollah Emami-Kashani also stressed the need for a continuous campaign against profiteers and economic saboteurs. He said: This important measure which is supported by the esteemed leader of the Islamic revolution [Ayatollah Khamene'i] and enjoys the widespread support of the people should be continued relentlessly, without going to extremes.

He strongly criticized the weak response of international organizations toward the Serbian genocide, especially their extensive attacks on the city of Bihac. He called for a serious reaction by international organizations toward this issue.

Deputy Interior Minister on Shiite-Sunni Clashes

95LA0043A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 6 Nov 94 pp 26-27

[Interview with First Deputy Interior Minister 'Ali Reza Tabish by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given: "We Do Not Exile Addicts to Khark Island"; first paragraph is AL-MAJALLAH introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-MAJALLAH has conducted an interview with 'Ali Reza Tabish, Iranian first deputy interior minister, and about the efforts to suppress societal conduct, combatting addiction and vice and the problems that occurred between Sunnis and Shiites in Mashhad and Zahdan. This is the text of the interview.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is the new structure of the security apparatus in Iran? Has it changed or is it still divided into Revolution Guards, police, and Komiteh [Revolution Committees].

[Tabish] The Majles decided some years ago to consolidate all security forces in Iran. On that basis, the Komiteh were consolidated with the Revolution Guards and the police. This consolidation occurred so that we may benefit from all Iranian security forces. In the past, municipalities were in charge of security in cities and villages, while the police were in charge of security elsewhere. As for the Komiteh and the Revolution Guards, they deal with internal security and combatting vice, addicts, and smugglers. All these forces protect the Islamic Republic.

[AL-MAJALLAH] But I have learned that the Komiteh still have special places in Tehran where women who do not follow the dress code are taken, and young men too?

[Tabish] The forces of law and order in Iran are divided into several sections. What you are referring to is one of the segments that deals with cases of "vice."

Those you have mentioned are not the Komiteh, but the Revolution Guards. The anti-vice force is a special one that has no relation to the Komiteh.

[AL-MAJALLAH] It is apparent these days that the clamp down on societal conduct has eased somewhat, but at the suggestion of the interior minister, the Majles adopted a decree some weeks ago to reinstate it. Why this decree?

[Tabish] Our policy has not changed. For us to assume that there has been an easing of the clamp down, there has to have been a clamp down. But what occurred in the past was not a clamp down. Naturally, with the coming of the revolution, it became essential to be rid of the bad social habits left by the era of the shah. For that reason, our security forces attempted to change those habits and were obliged to deal with numerous situations. However, Islamic traditions and customs have now taken hold in our country. Everyone understands these laws and their intent. It is recognized the world over that individuals who do not observe the laws of the country in which they live have to be reminded of those laws.

[AL-MAJALLAH] By being prosecuted?

[Tabish] By being reminded only.

[AL-MAJALLAH] But in the past they were put on trial and many young men and women were imprisoned simply for listening to music, or for putting on makeup in the case of the young women. I now seen ladies on the street putting makeup on their faces, and they are not subject to any punishment?

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[Tabish] This is something that you yourself noticed and are saying. As far as we are concerned, nothing has changed. We have not put anyone on trial in the past for those reasons, and we do not do so now. Our people know these laws and respect them, and our security forces remind whoever does not observe these laws of their existence.

[AL-MAJALLAH] How do they remind them? In what manner? Do they pay a material penalty, as people are saying?

[Tabish] There is no basis for anything like what you are saying. Our people respect religious and governmental laws because the majority is made up of religious Muslims who know that our laws spring from religion and have to be respected. What is inside our society is not what you see on the street. The majority is loyal to Islamic observances and abides by them. At this time, there is no need to penalize people. We take the offender to a police station voluntarily and remind him. Our religion embodies what is known as commanding virtue and forbidding vice, and all the people in Iran command virtue and forbid vice.

We attempt to advise people to respect and implement the laws.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Is the news item that was published quoting the interior minister, Mohammad 'Ali Besharati, about reinstating the clamp down accurate?

[Tabish] Reinstating the clamp down is not accurate. We ask people to command virtue amongst themselves and to forbid vice. What was published about such a decree is not accurate.

The Addiction Question

[AL-MAJALLAH] Tehran in particular and Iran in general are confronting an addiction problem. What steps is the Interior Ministry taking to help Iranians ease this phenomenon? What is the rehabilitation program that is being implemented on Khark Island?

[Tabish] It is commonly accepted that drugs come to us from neighboring countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan to be exact. As a first step, we are trying to prevent the entry of narcotic drugs into our country by monitoring or closing the borders. A large security force has been assigned to combat drug traffickers. We have signed an agreement with Pakistan to close the borders between the two countries to prevent smuggling. Each year we conduct a security seminar between the interior ministers of the two countries and their deputies. This year, we began cooperating with the United Nations and Pakistan to combat the outbreak of addiction and the distribution of drugs. We have also signed an agreement with the United Nations and Pakistan on that issue. The other step in combatting addiction is the rehabilitation of addicts after treating them in the medical centers of Iran. They are under the control of the Ministry of Health. In addition, we convene conferences with various countries to combat addiction.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is the story of Khark Island. Who are the addicts that are exiled to that island?

[Tabish] We have no center in Khark Island. We do not even put smugglers on that island, let alone addicts. Our rehabilitation centers are limited to Tehran and various Iranian cities. After rehabilitating the addicts, we attempt to reintegrate them into society through employment.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Why do most Iranians speak of banishment or exile to Khark Island?

[Tabish] I am amazed at this question especially as Khark is an oil industry island.

[AL-MAJALLAH] I know very well that it is an oil industry island, but all the Iranians with whom I spoke about this subject said that addicts were banished to Khark.

[Tabish] You may go there to see for yourself.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Statistics indicate that there are 6 million addicts in Iran, 70 percent of whom are among the youth. Is that number accurate?

[Tabish] I cannot specify the number, but it is certainly much less than you mentioned.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Because of the economic crisis in Iran and the financial difficulties that people are experiencing, the number of beggars has increased. They have formed beggar gangs and it is said that the security forces have conducted a campaign against beggars and banished them from Tehran.

[Tabish] We initiated our program to check the economic crisis following a decision by the Majles. This program relies on Iran's natural resources to safeguard the average cost of living. Under this plan, we have set a limit on imports, and we have begun to rely on our local resources to ease the severity of inflation. For those reasons, you sometimes feel the a shortage of products. In order to change this situation, the state has begun to organize the domestic market with measures like price controls and the halting of exploitation and the manipulation of the black market.

As for beggars, there are special centers to help and provide for the needs of the indigent (like the Imam Khomeyni Relief Organization). Everyone in Iran attempts to help those people. There are a number of beggars on the streets, but they follow this profession and are not indigent. We arrested a person in Tehran who formed a gang of beggars.

[AL-MAJALLAH] The word is that there were 100,000 beggars and 30,000 prostitutes in Tehran and that they have been banished from Tehran?

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[Tabish] Our magazines and newspapers have too much freedom. Many of their news items have no relation to reality. We, at the Interior Ministry, are responsible for the problem of beggars, and I declare the report is not accurate.

Mashhad and Zahdan

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is the role of internal security in what took place in Mashhad and Zahdan regarding the demolition of the Sunni mosque, especially as some anticipate the occurrence of sectarian disturbances in Iran. Did security or the Revolution Guards have some kind of responsibility?

[Tabish] As far as the Interior Ministry is concerned, no problem exists regarding what occurred in Mashhad and Zahdan. Iran is considered to be one of the safer countries of the world. We have no security problems. Simple infractions might sometimes take place, and they are confronted by the people who support our internal forces.

[AL-MAJALLAH] But is it possible that such a confrontation might involve a mistake or an injustice, and is it possible that those who are doing the confronting are zealous and that their response is wrong?

[Tabish] We had no confrontation between factions.

[AL-MAJALLAH] That is untrue. In Mashhad and Zahdan there was ...

[Tabish] What took place in Mashhad and Zahdan is that a group of vermin and riffraff committed a hostile act and were confronted by the people. Those do not represent the Iranian people, only a group.

[AL-MAJALLAH] A group of what?

[Tabish] A group of riffraff and vermin, and their number is limited.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What took place in Mashhad is that there was a decision to demolish a mosque belonging to the Sunni sect and the Sunnis there protested. A group of Iranians arrived and wanted to demolish the mosque by force. Did security intervene to separate the Iranian fighters (the riffraff!) and the others?

[Tabish] This is what Western newspapers are saying. We have a large group of Sunnis, and we coexist with them, and there is mutual respect. We have no sectarian war between Sunnis and Shiites in Iran.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What took place then?

[Tabish] Sunnis and Shiites live in complete unity and harmony. The ulema of the Sunni sect participate in all conferences, and they themselves confirm that. The problem is nonexistent. The Sunni mosques are numerous in our country and they practice their rituals without any problems. They also have their own religious schools and ulema. Each year we have a week-long period when we celebrate the unity of Sunnis and Shiites in Iran. Those who wanted to create problems between Sunnis and Shiites in Iran have not achieved any results, and history has proved that. We are not worried on that score. However, from time to time a small group might appear seeking to create problems. The matter is closed however.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What did this "group" do?

[Tabish] The municipality in Mashhad had wanted to demolish a section of homes without explaining the reason to the people, and this problem arose.

[AL-MAJALLAH] And the demolition of the mosque?

[Tabish] There is no problem concerning the mosque.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Let us assume that this is so, and the Iranians protested against the demolition of their homes without explanation. Would you call them vermin and riffraff?

[Tabish] The problem was not between the Sunnis and Shiites, but those people politicized the issue.

[AL-MAJALLAH] According to you then, the Sunni mosque was not demolished?

[Tabish] The Sunnis have many mosques in Mashhad. Perhaps the mosque that you speak of was part of the demolition plan. There are many mosques that are demolished in order to build modern roads. The problem did not occur because of the mosque, but because of the homes.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Was the mosque demolished or not?

[Tabish] There is no problem whatsoever regarding the mosque. If a mosque was demolished in Mashhad, then they will rebuild it in another place.

[AL-MAJALLAH] And the matter of the Zahdan incidents?

[Tabish] We have no incidents or problems in Zahdan.

Saddam Preferred to American-Backed 'Alternative'

MM2311125594 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Nov 94 pp1, 4

[Report by 'Adnan Husayn: "Khamene'i's Assistant: Our Interests Before Iraqi Shiites"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London—Iranian Leader 'Ali Khamene'i's assistant has stated that for the time being Iran prefers the survival of the Iraqi regime headed by President Saddam Husayn so long as the alternative is an "American" one. He said that "the interests of a few million Shiites in Iraq are not as important as the interests of the majority who are in Iran."

Iraqi Shiite opposition sources quoted Agha Mohammadi, Khamene'i's assistant and representative for Iraqi

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affairs, as saying that Iran believes that the likely alternative to Saddam Husayn's regime is "an American regime" that would be used by Washington to implement a "plan" to topple the mullas regime in Tehran, and that is why the Iranian leaders would rather prefer Saddam Husayn to remain in power.

Mohammadi made an unannounced visit to the British capital early this month arranged by Emma Nicholson, the Conservative member of parliament interested in the conditions of the people of the marshes in southern Iraq, in what was described by sources close to Mohammadi's talks with British second-rank officials as an attempt to revive relations between Tehran and London, which have been frozen for years. On the sidelines of the visit, the Iranian leader's assistant held long meetings with Iraqi opposition representatives on the Iraqi situation and relations between Iran and Iraq.

The Iraqi opposition representatives who met with the Iranian official have stated that they asked him about Iranian policy on Iraq and the Iraqi opposition and addressed some questions to him about the scope of Iraqi-Iranian relations in the light of the increasing trade between the two sides and the fact that some Iranian circles have been secretly selling Iraqi oil in violation of the UN Security Council resolutions which, since the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, have prohibited the export and sale of Iraqi oil abroad. They have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Khamene'i's assistant assured them that Iran is still opposed to President Saddam Husayn's regime and looks forward to its downfall, and that he urged unification of the opposition forces to achieve that objective if the alternative is not "American."

When asked why Iran has been turning a blind eye to the export of various Iranian commodities to Iraq and of Iraqi commodities to Iran and facilitating the secret sale of Iraqi oil to other states via Iranian ports and territory, Mohammadi said that trade between Iran and Iraq is confined to selling Iraq food and medicines "to ease the Iraqi people's suffering." He denied that Tehran is purchasing or facilitating the export of oil or any other banned commodity to Iran or via Iran. Earlier reports had said that Iran was facilitating the smuggling and secret sale of Iraqi oil to third parties friendly to both sides, including Armenia, Sudan, and North Korea. These operations include other goods. Iraqi cement and fertilizers are being sold in Iranian markets, and Iran exports to Iraq foodstuffs and car tires which primarily benefit the Iraqi Army. During the past few weeks the U.S. naval forces controlling the blockade against Iraq intercepted two tankers in the Arabian Gulf carrying Iraqi oil. They delivered them to the authorities in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, which will sell the cargo of the two tankers and deposit the proceeds in the special fund for the UN operations in Iraq.

The Iraqi opposition representatives who met with Mohammadi conveyed to him their strong suspicions about Iranian policy and intentions regarding Iraq and its future and requested that Iran "stop interfering in Iraqi affairs." They were referring to the Iranian attempts to control the Iraqi opposition forces and steer them in the direction of Iranian policies, and to the direct Iranian interference in the popular uprising which followed the Kuwait liberation war early in 1991, something seen by the Iraqi opposition as the main cause of the failure of that uprising because the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's entry into Iraqi towns in the south aroused the allies' fear of an Iranian plan to set up a regime in Iraq similar to that in Iran. The Iraqi opposition believes that the Iranian interference in the uprising was the factor which more than once prevented the creation of a safe haven in southern Iraq similar to that given the Kurds in northern Iraq.

Representatives of the Iraqi Shiite opposition who met with Mohammadi have stated, however, that he was so frank with them that he told them that Iran is not for the time being in favor of bringing down Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's regime. They said that Khamene'i's assistant gave them Iran's analysis of the current Iraqi situation. That analysis maintains that the Iraqi opposition forces are not yet qualified to topple Saddam Husayn's regime and replace it with a regime of their own, and that the United States is now working for Saddam Husayn's downfall through an internal military coup or in cooperation between officers in the Iraqi Army and the opposition's Iraqi National Congress which enjoys Washington's support.

Iran, at any rate, believes that any change in the Iraqi regime at the present time would be in favor of the United States if not by direct arrangement of the United States, which, according to the Iranian analyis, would mean that the next Iraqi regime would be "American" and that the United States would use it in what the Iranian official described as "the current American war against Iran," which he believes "is about to escalate." That was how Mohammadi explained to the Shiite opposition representatives the Iranian policy aimed at normalizing relations with Saddam Husayn's regime and increasing trade between the two countries.

According to one of these sources, Khamene'i's assistant said that Iran feared that an alternative Iraqi regime would not recognize the compensation due to Iran from Iraq for the eight years of war, and that Iran is of the opinion that the internationally isolated regime of Saddam might begin to pay some of these compensations when the embargo on importing Iraqi oil is lifted "because, being internationally isolated, it would need Iran."

According to the same sources, when told that such a policy which seeks to keep Saddam in power would be extremely harmful to the Shiite population of Iraq, whom Saddam has not stopped killing and repressing, Khamene'i's assistant replied that the interests of the Iranian Shiites, who are greater in number, take priority over the interests of the Iraqi Shiites.

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Admiral: Navy Capable of Repelling U.S. 'Threat'

LD2411221194 Tehran IRNA in English 2137 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov. 24, IRNA—Deputy commander of the naval forces Rear-Admiral Abbas Mohtaj said on the threshold of 'Navy Day' (November 28) that political and military movements in the Persian Gulf did not go unnoticed by Iran.

Mohtaj said Iran's naval units enjoy high combat readiness and to keep them well-prepared, maneuvres are held on an average of one every week with different objectives.

Calling war as a "bitter reality", Mohtaj said despite a claim made by the world on making efforts to prevent eruption of war, over 170 wars of varying degrees had flared up in different parts of the world after the second world war and the casualties left as a result were more than the casualties of the first world war.

He said that Islamic Iran abhors war, but in order to attain real peace the country should raise its military potential so as to maintain a power equilibrium, even though for maintaining the power balance quantity is not the main concern.

Rejecting allegation of massive military purchases by Iran, Mohtaj said the budget allocated for the armed forces has been less than dlrs 10 billion over the past decade, and as has been announced time and again, Iran's military strategy is a defensive one, in keeping with its economic and cultural potential.

Among factors which proved significant in the eight-year Iraqi war (1980-88), said Mohtaj, were reliance on public presence in the form of a million-strong-force, emphasis on the lofty values of fraternity and faith, spirit of resistance and martyrdom, qualitative training and utilization of scientific and research resources.

He disclosed that several surface units and a submarine have newly been purchased, while the damaged vessels have been repaired and equipped with new armaments. The naval commander said potential threats to Iran exist in the Persian Gulf as indicated by the history of military developments in the waterway, and that Iraq could be called one such threat despite its present weakness.

He said Iran could not ignore the massive military purchases of the neighbouring states and their getting on lease military equipment from other countries. He added that Iran should be well-prepared and defend itself under any condition. According to Mohtaj, the presence of alien forces in the Persian Gulf, especially the Americans, is tantamount to a basic threat against the Islamic Republic of Iran, and that Iran's naval unit should be capable of repelling it.

Referring to the U.S. setbacks over the past years, he said the U.S. might be superior in the area of technology, but during the holy defense its high vulnerability was crystal clear.

Basij Forces Commander Discusses Troop Training

LD2511121294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Today on the occasion of the Basij Week and the anniversary of the formation of the 20-million-strong army, Brigadier-General Ali Reza Afshar, the commander of the Basij Resistance Forces, described the programs and the achievements of that organization.

He stressed that the formation of Ashura battalions, resistance bases and other battalions and organizing the Basijis groups in all the cities, factories, mosques, hoseyniyyeh and government offices are necessary, and the officials in charge of those centers should provide necessary cooperation.

Brig-Gen Afshar presenting a report about the activities of that organization during the year 1372 [Iranian year ending 21 March 1994], said: During the past year 117,000 Basijis received elementary training, 12,000 received advanced training, and 6,400 received specialized training.

Brig-Gen Afshar said: More than 998,000 pupils have passed the theoretical and practical courses and have also completed the defense preparedness courses in schools. Nearly 153,000 other pupils who had already completed those courses have taken part in refresher courses.

He added: During this period, 110,000 Basijis have also completed training courses, rules concerning the identification of offences [as heard] and military training in the field of enjoining good and forbidding evil and have been made ready for service.

Khamene'i: Women's Rights 'Infinitely Better'

LD2311190194 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 23 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In a meeting with a group of women from throughout the country—on the threshold of the birthday of Her Holiness Fatimah Zahra, the esteemed daughter of the Prophet of Islam, God's peace be upon her—the Exalted Leader of the revolution, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, called the Islamic Republic of Iran as a country where women's rights are observed infinitely better than other countries. He considered the Western propaganda against Iran, which concerns that issue, to be hostile, political, and untrue.

At the meeting, where a group of women managers, specialists, artists, and experts were gathered, the Leader of the Islamic revolution described the presence and the role of Muslim and revolutionary women in the country's various arenas to be prominent and significant and said: The presence and effect of women on the diverse

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arenas of the [Iran-Iraq] war, political events, demonstrations, and the arenas of learning and reconstruction demonstrate the permanent and increasing trend of the presence and social activity of women in Iran. [passage omitted]

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i said: Today the propaganda by the enemies of Islam and the revolution, concerning the status of women in Iran, are hostile, all-pervading, political, and untrue, which are designed to exert pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran. Therefore, at this juncture, women in the Islamic community carry a crucial duty in neutralizing the enemies' propaganda.

The Exalted Leader of the Islamic revolution described the deprivation of the Iranian women in moving towards learning and knowledge to stem from the ignorance, prejudice, and incompetence of those in power during the former regime and said: As a result of the import and spread of a European style education in Iran, believing and Muslim families had been dragged into a situation where they were insecure about the presence of their daughters in schools and social, scientific, and educational environments. That resulted in the deprivation of Iranian women, from the point of view of learning and culture, in comparison to men. But after the victory of the Islamic revolution, the presence of women increased in all the arenas of the community, especially in scientific and research areas.

In another part of his remarks, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i considered the reason for the adverse Western propaganda concerning women's status in Iran to stem from the resistance of the Muslim Iranian women towards Western culture and said: The Muslim nation of Iran dislikes the Western culture and has no affinity with it. We believe that despite all the propaganda ploys which are deployed in the name of support for women, they do not accord true personality and respect for women.

Concluding, the Exalted Leader of the Islamic revolution considered the place, virtues, human, social, and legal particularities of the family in the Islamic states—especially in the Islamic Republic of Iran—to be superior to Western and non- Islamic countries and said: Because of its observance of the true rights of women and the family, the Islamic Republic of Iran is more advanced than Western countries. Iran considers the tyrannies and the disrespect carried out against women in Western countries—especially in America—to be reprehensible. [passage omitted]

Ayatollah Pardons 190 Women Convicts

LD2411115894 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] On the occasion of the auspicious birthday of Her Holiness Fatima Zahra [Prophet Muhammad's daughter], peace be upon her, his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the eminent leader of the Islamic revolution, has agreed with the pardon of some 190 women convicted by the country's general and revolutionary courts.

The leader's decision was based on a recommendation by Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, the head of the judiciary.

Rafsanjani on Women's Rights in Islamic Society

LD2411160994 Tehran IRNA in English 1424 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov. 24, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Thursday [24 November] said Islamic Iran believed women's rights should be secured in accordance with progressive Islamic rules and that every attempt to disregard these rights and weaken the family foundations is doomed.

Referring to women's social status, Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani said the status envisaged for women both in Islam and the Islamic revolution is much more higher than their status quo.

Attending a ceremony on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Hazrat Fatimah (a.s.), the daughter of Prophet Muhammad (s), President Rafsanjani expressed satisfaction with the Islamic revolution preparing the grounds for Muslim women's activities.

He said after the revolution Muslim women while preserving their Islamic identity could have active presence in economic, social and political scenes according to their potentials.

The president felt confident that the Iranian women can make use of the opportunities and while maintaining the Islamic principles and values, show their talents and capabilities in cultural and scientific centers.

He stressed that the teachings of Islam, the Holy Koran and guidelines of the late Imam Khomeyni and the leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, are the main sources for securing women's rights in Iran. Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani added that women's liberal [as received] movement in western societies which lacked genuine principles has been diverted due to debauchery.

Recalling the devotion of those who attained martyrdom during the Iraqi imposed war (1980-88), the president lauded their families, their mothers and spouses in particular.

Earlier at the ceremony held at Azadi sports stadium, president's advisor in charge of women affairs, Shahla Habibi, reported on the programs held during the women's week in commemoration of Hazrat Fatimah (pbuh).

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Memorandum of Understanding Signed with Kazakhstan

LD2411165094 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A memorandum of understanding was signed today by the visiting Kazakh Supreme Council chairman, Abish Kekilbayev, and Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri. Our correspondent reports:

[Correspondent] Through this memorandum of understanding, the two sides have agreed on setting up parliamentary friendship groups, exchanges of parliamentary and expert delegations, and exchanging experience in legislation and methods of producing and arranging legal documents.

The chairman of the Kazakh Supreme Council expressed his satisfaction with his visit to Iran and described the results of his talks with our country's high-ranking officials as positive and successful. He stressed the need for the expansion of ties between the two countries, especially in the economic sector, as well as bilateral cooperation between the two countries' parliaments.

Majlis Speaker Nateq-Nuri, elaborating on the contents of the memorandum, said: In a meeting with the chairman of the Kazakh Supreme Council a proposal was presented for the formation of interparliamentary (?meetings) of Economic Cooperation Organization member states, and it was decided that the Kazakh officials would first study the proposal before announcing their views. The Majlis speaker added: In the field of economic issues, especially oil and expansion of railways, discussions were held. The two sides agreed for such visits to continue between the two countries.

Oman Said Asked To Mediate Over UAE Islands

MM2311170194 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Nov 94 p6

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tehran, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—According to informed sources, Iran has sought the assistance of the Sultanate of Oman to arrange talks with the United Arab Emirates [UAE] in what is seen as an Iranian attempt to defuse the explosive crisis between the two states because of the dispute over the three islands.

The aim behind the Iranian call is to discuss a three-point plan which could break the current deadlock. According to Tehran sources, these three points are:

1. That both sides refrain from taking any steps that would intensify the tension between them.

2. That a date be set for bilateral talks.

3. Recognition of the agreement signed by Iran and the United Kingdom in 1971 regarding the island of Abu-Musa as the main document to be referred to. This means that Iran would not agree to hold any negotiations regarding the islands of Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra.

The Iranian Government is unhappy about the the UAE's policy of raising the issue of the islands in every joint statement it signs with foreign governments. [passage omitted]

Egypt To Repay 1975 Loan With Equipment

LD2411171594 Tehran IRNA in English 1637 GMT 24 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov. 24, IRNA—The Egyptian Central Bank will pay back dlrs. 149 million it received from Iran in loan in 1975. According to an agreement signed here Thursday, the loan will be repaid by means of providing machinery and equipment.

Talks had been held between Iran's Economic and Finance Ministry and Egypt's Central Bank and Ministry of Economy and Foreign Trade over the past months on the repayment of the loan.

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